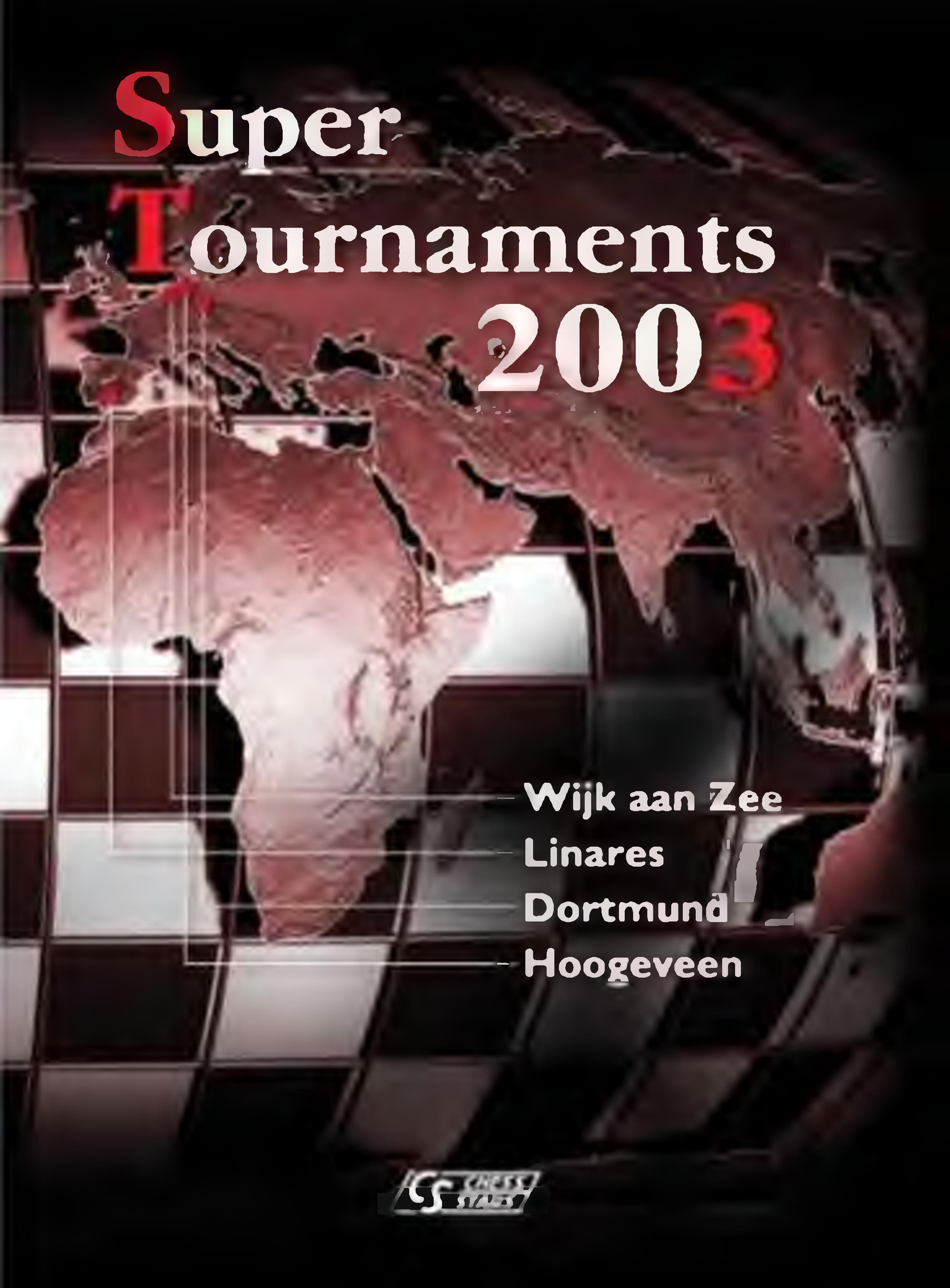
Super Tournaments 2003

Wijk aan Zee
Linares
Dortmund
Hoogeveen



CHESS STARS

CHESS
STARS

IM Sergei Soloviov

Super Tournaments
2003

With annotations by Grandmasters

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Preface

The so-called reunification match could have easily become the central chess event of 2003. It was not a bad idea after all. At first Kramnik and Leko had to determine who was the best according to the version of the Einstein Group (having purchased from Braingames the rights to organize the world-championship in "classical chess"), and later Kasparov and Ponomariov had to clarify who was the strongest under the auspices of FIDE. The match between Kramnik and Leko never came on the agenda, while the match between Kasparov and Ponomariov was first planned to be held in Buenos Aires (June 19th – July 7th, with a prize fund of US $ 1,000,000), then in Yalta, Ukraine (September 18th – October 6th)... In the end these two matches were never played and the chess-world had two champions just as before.

This book aims to provide in-depth comments on all 176 games of the category 18 and higher Super-Tournaments: Corus (Wijk aan Zee), Linares, Sparkasse Chess-Meeting (Dortmund) and Essent Crown (Hoogeveen).

We can also mention among other interesting chess events the "Aeroflot-Open" (this tournament will make the Guiness Book of Records because there were never before 157 GMs in an open-tournament) as well as the unique distance chess match between St-Petersburg and the NAO Chess Club in Paris. The Saint Petersburg City team won 2.5-1.5 (Konstantin Sakaev ½ Sergey Karyakin, Viktor Korchnoi 1-0 Laurent Fressinet, Peter Svidler ½ Teimour Radjabov, Alexander Khalifman ½ Vladimir Kramnik).

We can also mention some other notable events:

Open

Aeroflot Open, Moscow 10-20.02.2003

1-4. V.Bologan (2630), A.Aleksandrov (2633), A.Fedorov (2579), P.Svidler (2693) – 7 (of 9), **5-10**. E.Najer (2585), A.Galkin (2568), S.Rublevsky (2644), K.Sakaev (2645), A.Dreev (2690), P.Smirnov (2572) – 6.5, **11-28** M.Ulibin (2581), S.Dolmatov (2591), A.Moiseenko (2597), X.Bu (2569), S.Savchenko (2539), M.Gagunashvili (2563), E.Sutovsky (2651), G.Kaidanov (2629), A.Lugovoi (2540), V.Popov (2579), A.Morozevich (2678), Sh.Mamedyarov (2596), M.Kobalia (2635), A.Shomoev (2541), V.Tkachev (2642), I.Khenkin (2624), J.Granda Zuniga (2623), G.Timoshenko (2539) – 6, **29-55** ... I.Smirin (2664), L.Van Wely (2668), J.Lautier (26700, V.Malakhov (2677), P.Tregubov (2612), K.Landa (2649), A.Motylev (2640)... – 5.5, **56-82** ... V.Zvjaginsev (2671) A.Lastin (2636), A.Grischuk (2712), L.Aronian (2610), M.Kazhgaleyev (2604), E.Alekseev (2614), R.Vaganian (2667) – 5, ... 201 players

Round Robin

Hrokurinn Chess Tournament, Reykjavik, 18-27.02.2003, cat.15
1.A.Shirov – 7 (of 10), 2-3.B.Macieja, V.Korchnoi – 6, 4-5.I.Sokolov, L.McShane – 5.5, 6.M.Adams – 5, 7.E.Bacrot – 3.5, 8.H.Stefansson – 3, 9.H.Gretarsson – 2.5, 10.S.Kristjansson – 1.

Dos Hermanas, 28.03-13.04.2003, cat.16
1-2.A.Rustemov, A.Dreev – 6 (of 9), 3-4.A.Khalifman, V.Vallejo Pons – 5.5, 5-6.V.Epishin, A.Shirov – 5, 7.S.Karjakin – 3.5, 8-9.M.Illescas Cordoba, D.Campora – 3, 10.S.Tiviakov – 2.5.

SIS-MH Masters, Middelfart, 5-6.04.2003, cat.16
1.V.Anand – 5.5 (of 6), 2-3.P.Nielsen, C.Hansen – 3, 4.J.Hector – 0.5.

Hunguest Hotels Tournament, Budapest, 11-18.04, 2003, cat.17
1.N.Short – 6.5 (of 9), 2.Ju.Polgar – 5.5, 3.P.Leko – 5, 4-6.P.Acs, B.Gelfand, C.Lutz – 4.5, 7-8.V.Korchnoi, S.Movsesian – 4, 9.F.Berkes – 3.5, 10.Z.Almasi – 3.

Poikovsky International, 20-29.04.2003, cat.16.
1-2.P.Svidler, J.Lautier – 6 (of 9), 3-4.S.Rublevsky, V.Zvjaginsev – 5.5, 5.A.Onischuk –5, 6.G.Vescovi – 4.5, 7.V.Bologan – 4, 8.Y.Pelletier – 3.5, 9.S.Lputian – 3, 10.A.Obodchuk – 2.

Bosnia, Sarajevo, 18-27.05.2003, cat.16
1.I.Sokolov – 6.5 (of 9), 2-4.S.Movsesian, A.Shirov, R.Kasimdzhanov – 6, 5.T.Radjabov – 5, 6-7.B.Kurajica, E.Bareev – 4.5, 8.Z.Kozul – 3, 9.B.Damljanovic – 2, 10.E.Dizdarevic – 1.5.

Enghien-les-Bains, 13-22.06.2003, cat.17
1.E.Bareev – 6.5 (of 9), 2.M.Adams – 6, 3-4.B.Gelfand, Ju.Polgar – 5.5, 5.L.Fressinet – 4.5, 6.C.Bauer – 4, 7-8.T.Radjabov, J.Lautier – 3.5, 9-10.V.Akopian, V.Korchnoi – 3.

Biel, 19.07-1.08.2003, cat.16
1.A.Morozevich – 8 (of 10), 2-3.E.Bacrot, I.Smirin – 6.5, 4.Y.Pelletier – 4, 5.C.Lutz – 3, 6.V.Korchnoi – 2.

Samba Cup, Skanderborg, 10-19.10. 2003, cat.16
1-4.P.Nielsen, D.Sadvakasov, N.Short, C.Hansen – 5.5 (of 9), 5-6.V.Ivanchuk,

V.Bologan – 5, 7.R.Kasimdzhanov – 4.5, 8.E.Alekseev – 3.5, 9-10.K.Sasikiran, D.Palo – 2.5.

Rapid

As always there were many tournaments with rapid time controls. The most remarkable of them were the following:

Keres Memorial, Tallinn, 10-12.01.2003, cat.13

1.A.Morozevich – 5.5 (of 7), 2-3.A.Dreev, E.Miroshnichenko – 5, 4.J.Ehlvest – 4, 5.V.Gavrikov – 3.5, 6.A.Zontakh – 2.5, 7.A.Veingold – 1.5, 8.M.Kanep – 1.

Edda Rapid Tournament, Reykjavik, 3-5.03.2003

1.M.Gurevich – 8 (of 9), 2-3.I.Sokolov, E.Sutovsky – 7, 4-12.J.Lautier, A.Shirov, M.Adams, L.Van Wely, P.Nikolic, J.Ehlvest, E.Bacrot, J.Votava – 6.5 ... 102 players

Amber, Monaco, 15-27.03.2003, cat.19

Prizes worth $193,250 were at stake.

1.V.Anand – 14.5 (of 22) , 2-3.P.Leko, A.Morozevich – 13.5, 4-5.V.Kramnik, V.Topalov – 13, 6.B.Gelfand – 12, 7.A.Shirov – 11.5, 8.E.Bareev – 11, 9.Z.Almazi – 9.5, 10.V.Ivanchuk – 9, 11.L.Van Wely – 8, 12.L.Ljubojevic – 3.5.

International Chess Encounters World Rapid Chess Championship, Cap D'Agde, 23-30.10.2003

16 GMs took part and among them there were 11 of the 12 top rated players. Each player had 25 minutes + 10 seconds per move played. After the group stages the top four from each group qualified for the quarter finals of the knockout.

Group A. cat. 19

1-3.V.Kramnik, R.Ponomariov, E.Bacrot – 4.5 (of 7), 4-5.B.Gelfand, V.Topalov – 3.5, 6-8.Z.Azmaiparashvili, M.Adams, E.Bareev – 2.5.

Group A. cat. 19

1.P.Svidler – 5 (of 7), 2.A.Grischuk – 4.5, 3-4.V.Anand, Ju.Polgar – 4, 5-6.A.Shirov, P.Leko – 3.5, 7.J.Lautier – 2, 8.A.Karpov – 1.5

¼-finals:	P.Svidler – V.Topalov 1.5 – 0.5
	A.Grischuk – E.Bacrot 3 – 1
	V.Anand – R.Ponomariov 1.5 – 0.5
	V.Kramnik – Ju.Polgar 1.5 – 0.5
½-finals	V.Anand – P.Svidler 2.5 – 1.5
	V.Kramnik – A.Grischuk 2 – 0
Final:	V.Anand – V.Kramnik 1.5 – 0.5

7th Corsica Open, Bastia, 28.10-3.11.2003

1/8-finals A.Grischuk – T.Radjabov 4 – 2
A.Karpov – L.Van Wely 1.5 – 0.5
M.Gurevich – K.Sasikiran 1.5 – 0.5
V.Topalov – A.Motylev 2 – 0
B.Gelfand – L.Aronian 1.5 – 0.5
A.Shirov – V.Tkachiev 4 – 2
J.Lautier – V.Epishin 2 – 0
V.Anand – M.Cebalo 1.5 – 0.5
¼-finals: V.Topalov – M.Gurevich 1.5 – 0.5
A.Grischuk - B.Gelfand 1.5 – 0.5
V.Anand – J.Lautier 1.5 – 0.5
A.Shirov – A.Karpov 3.5 – 2.5
½-finals: V.Topalov – A.Shirov 2.5 – 1.5
V.Anand – A.Grischuk 1.5 – 0.5
Finals: V.Anand – V.Topalov 4 – 2

Bali Hotel, Benidorm, 27.11-29.11.2003, cat.16

1.V.Topalov – 7 (of 10), 2-3.Vanand, T.Radjabov – 6.5, 4.F.Vallejo Pons – 6, 5.S.Karjakin – 5, 6-8.T.Hillarp Persson, Z.Azmaiparashvili, S.Mamedyarov – 4.5, 9-10.A.Graf , Ju.Polgar – 4, 11.A.Romero Holmes – 2.5.

Championships

Russian Championships

Alexander Zhukov (who is also famous for being the president of the budget committee in the State Duma and a vice-premier later) became the president of the Russian Chess Federation and that had a quite noticeable effect on the chess life throughout the top chess country in the world. All the strongest grandmasters (with the exception only of E.Bareev, A.Karpov, G.Kasparov and V.Kramnik) played in the Russian Championships in 2003. The reason evidently was the huge prize fund of US $100.000. The Russian Championships in the following year is planned to be held in a round-robin format with the participation of ALL the strongest Russian grandmasters.

Krasnojarsk. 3-12.09.2003, 80 players including 57 GMs.

1.P.Svidler (2723) – 7 (of 9), 2.A.Morozevich (2679) – 7, 3.V.Malakhov (2696), 4.S.Dvoirys (2555), 5.V.Zvjaginsev (2653), 6.A.Motylev (2634), 7.A.Grischuk (2732), 8.A.Khalifman (2678), 9.S.Volkov (2620), 10.E.Najer (2608) –6, 11-19.D.Jakovenko(2564), Y.Yakovich (2573), A.Kharlov (2591), V.Tseshkovsky (2538), E.Alekseev (2613), K.Sakaev (2655), D.Bocharov (2556), I.Glek (2566), M.Sorokin (2560) – 5.5 ...

4th European Individual Championships

The European Championships took place in Silivri, Turkey, May 30th - June 14th 2003. This was a 13 round Swiss. Zurab Azmaiparashvili won the event with 9.5 of 13. There was a playoff for Silver and Bronze which was won by Vladimir Malakhov 1.5-0.5 over Alexander Graf.

1.Z.Azmaiparashvili – 9.5, 2.V.Malakhov – 9, 3.A.Graf – 9, 4-14.Ki.Georgiev, A.Kharlov, K.Sakaev, I.Iordachescu, M.Kobalia, S.Sulskis, E.Sutovsky, L.Aronian, V.Ivanchuk, A.Galkin, A.Moiseenko – 8.5 ... 207 players

4th European Individual Women's Championships

The European Women's Championships took place in Istanbul, Turkey, June 2-13, 2003.

The Women's Championship playoff was won by Pia Cramling who defeated Viktorija Cmilyte 1.5-0.5.

1.P.Cramling – 8.5, 2.V. Cmilyte – 8.5, 3.T.Kosintseva – 8 ...

Teams

European Club Cup

Rethymnon, 27.09-5.10.2003.

1. NAO Chess Club (A.Grischuk, P.Svidler, M.Adams, J.Lautler, Vallejo Pons, E.Bacrot, L.Fressinet, I.-A.Nataf) – 13, 2.Polonia Plus (V.Ivanchuk, B.Gelfand, B.Macieja, T.Markowski, M.Krasenkow, R.Kempinski, B.Socko) – 12, 3.Kiseljak (Azmaiparashvili, Almasi, A.Aleksandrov, P.Nikolic, A.Fedorov, M.Palac) – 12, 4.Norilsky Nikel (S.Dolmatov, A.Dreev, Agalkin, V.Malakhov, A.Onischuk, V.Zvjaginsev, V.Najer) – 11, 5.Ladia-Kazan (G.Kasparov, V.Bologan, S.Rublevsky, I.Smirin, A.Timofeev, R.Hasangatin, A.Galliamova) – 10, 6.St.Petersburg – 10 ...

European Team Championships

Plovdiv, 10-21.10.2003.

37 men's and 31 women's teams competed.

Men: 1.Russia (P.Svidler, E.Bareev, A.Grischuk, A.Morozevich, A.Khalifman) – 17; 2.Israel (B.Gelfand, I.Smirin, E.Sutovsky, B.Avrukh) – 15; 3.Georgia (Z.Azmaiparashvili, G.Kacheishvili, M.Gagunashvili, M.Mchedlishvili) – 13; 4.Slovenia (A.Beliavsky, D.Pavasovic, D.Sermek, J.Borisek) – 13; 5.Ukraine (R.Ponomariov, A.Moiseenko, Baklan, P.Eljanov) – 12 ...

Women: 1.Armenia – 14; 2.Hungary – 14; 3.Russia – 13; 4.Poland – 12; 5.England – 12 ...

GERMANY

German Cup Final, Berlin, 22-23.03.2003.

SG Porz 1.5 – 2.5 SC Baden-Oos (Lutz 0 – 1 Svidler, Graf ½ Krasenkow, Vaganian ½ Huebner, Khalifman ½ Dautov)

Bundesliga

1.Lubecker SV (M.Adams, A.Grischuk, A.Shirov, J.Lautier, V.Epishin, L.Fressinet, J.Speelman, J.Hodgson, J.Nunn, L.Hansen, S.Conquest, J.Hector, N.DeFirmian, S.Agdestein)

2.SG Kuln Porz (C.Lutz, A.Khalifman, L.Van Wely, I.Sokolov, U.Andersson, R.Vaganian, Mi.Gurevich, C.Hansen, A.Graf, Van den Doel, Kengis.

FRANCE

Coupe de France

Paris NAO 3 – 1 Clichy (V.Kramnik 1 – 0 J.Degraeve, M.Adams ½ C.Bauer, J.Lautier ½ M.Apicella, L.Fressinet 1 – 0 E.Relange)

French National I league

1.Paris NAO (A.Grischuk, M.Adams, J.Lautier, E.Bacrot, P.Svidler ...) – 33, 2.Clichy – 30, 3.Cannes – 28 ...

SPAIN

Spanish Team Championships

1.C.A. Marcote – 25 (A.Graf, Z.Franco, G.Giorgadze, A.Hoffman, R.Reinaldo), C.A. Tiendas UPI – 22.5 (A.Khalifman, N.Short, I.Sokolov, D.Campora, J.Moreno, J.Candela), C.A. Valencia – 21 (A.Karpov, F.Vallejo, J.Arizmendi, M.Vassallo).

BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA

Bosnian Team Championships

1. SK Bosna (A.Shirov, E.Bareev, R.Kasimzhanov, S.Movsesian, Ki.Georgiev, Kozul, Kurajica) – 32.5, 2. SK Kiseljak (Z.Almasi, Aleksandrov, Fedorov ...) – 29, 3.Glasinac – 27.5 ...

RUSSIA

Russian Team Championships

1.Ladia-Kazan-1000 – 7 (S.Rublevsky, I.Smirin, V.Bologan, A.Kharlov, A.Timofeev, A.Galliamova, R.Khasangatin, A.Iljin), 2.Norilsky Nikel – 6 (A.Dreev, Onischuk, V.Malakhov, V.Zvjagintsev, A.Rustemov, E.Najer, S.Dolmatov, Galkin), 3.Tomsk-400 Yukos – 6 (A.Morozevich, A.Khalifman, Filippov, K.Landa, M.Kobalia, Pigusov, Belozerov, Khasin), 4.St.Petersburg – 6 (P.Svidler, K.Sakaev, V.Korchnoi, S.Volkov, Smirnov, S.Ivanov, V.Popov, A.Lugovoi) ...

Computer Chess

Man versus Computer

Evgeny Bareev vs. HIARCS 8, Maastricht, 28-31.01.2003.

Evgeny Bareev drew all four games with the computer program HIARCS.

Kasparov vs. Deep Junior, New York, 26.01-7.02.2003.

The event was called the "The FIDE Man Vs Machine World Chess Championship" and was sponsored by FIDE and presented by X3D Technologies Corporation. The Prize Fund was $1.000.000 with Garry Kasparov taking $750.000 and the DEEP JUNIOR team $250.000. The match ended up in a draw 3 – 3; each won one game.

Kasparov vs Fritz X3D, New York, 11-18.11.2003.

Kasparov used 3D glasses to see the 3D Board generated by Fritz. The match was drawn 2 – 2, each won one game.

Computer Championships

Paderborn, 19-23.02.2003.

1. FRITZ PADERBORN – 5 (of 7), 2-4.YACE 0.99.79, BRUTUS, SOS – 4.5, 5-7. SHREDDER, GANDALF 6.0, DIEP – 4 ...

World Computer Chess Championships

Graz, 22-30.11.2003.

1-2.FRITZ, SHREDDER – 9.5 (of 11), 3.DEEP JUNIOR – 9, 4.BRUTUS P I.XII – 8.5, 5-6.GREEN LIGHT, DIEP – 6, ...

Shredder won the championships after winning a playoff (1.5 – 0.5) against Fritz.

Corus

Wijk aan Zee – cat.18

			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
1	Anand	2753		=	=	1	=	=	=	=	=	1	1	1	=	=	8.5
2	Polgar Ju.	2700	=		=	=	=	1	=	=	=	=	1	=	=	1	8
3	Bareev	2729	=	=		0	0	1	1	0	1	=	=	1	=	1	7.5
4	Shirov	2723	0	=	1		1	0	=	1	=	=	=	1	0	=	7
5	Van Wely	2668	=	=	1	0		=	=	1	=	1	0	0	=	1	7
6	Grischuk	2712	=	0	0	1	=		=	=	1	=	=	=	1	=	7
7	Ivanchuk	2699	=	=	0	=	=	=		=	=	=	=	1	=	1	7
8	Kramnik	2807	=	=	1	0	0	=	=		=	1	=	0	1	1	7
9	Rajabov	2624	=	=	0	=	=	0	=	=		0	=	1	1	1	6.5
10	Topalov	2743	0	=	=	=	0	=	=	0	1		=	=	1	1	6.5
11	Karpov	2688	0	0	=	=	1	=	=	=	=	=		0	1	=	6
12	Ponomariov	2734	0	=	0	0	1	=	0	1	0	=	1		=	1	6
13	Krasenkow	2633	=	=	=	1	=	0	=	0	0	0	0	=		=	4.5
14	Timman	2594	=	0	0	=	0	=	0	0	0	0	=	0	=		2.5

Wijk aan Zee is a small village on the coast of the Atlantic ocean about forty kilometers away from Amsterdam.

The traditional chess festival was held there as usual in January. There were plenty of chess fans there with a minimal rating of 1400 and above alongside the strongest grandmasters in the world. The tournament used to be named after its previous main sponsor – the steel giant "Hoogovens". Nowadays the international English-Dutch corporation "Corus" sponsors the tournament.

There has not been such a strong and interesting tournament in the last several years as Wijk aan Zee 2003. Two world-champions played together at the same time – Vladimir Kramnik (classical chess) and Ruslan Ponomariov (FIDE version), as well as two ex-world champions – Anatoly Karpov and Vishvanatan Anand, together with a vice-world champion – Vasily Ivanchuk – and plenty of other brilliant grandmasters like Vesselin Topalov, Evgeny Bareev, Alexander Grishchuk, Alexey Shirov, Judit Polgar...

Anand played effortlessly like always while Judit Polgar was in excellent form, but it was Van Wely who surprised everybody by being among the leaders for a long time after winning three games in a row between rounds five to seven!

Bareev was the hero at the start with two out of two, but then he was beaten by Kramnik. Judit Polgar was on top after four rounds (having won against Timman and Karpov). Later Anand and Shirov caught up with her and after Van Wely beat Bareev in round six he joined them too. Anand and Van Wely were leading after round 7 with 5 points each followed closely by Polgar and Shirov. Anand continued to lead until round 12, followed by Polgar at a distance of only half a point. They met each other in a decisive game in round 12: Judit sacrificed a pawn and then she gave two pieces for a rook, but the game soon ended in a draw by a repetition of moves. This game was an excellent creative achievement by the winners of the tournament! They both made quick draws in the last round and secured the first two places for themselves. Bareev came third having overcome Ivanchuk in round 12 and Shirov disappointed the local fans (who had been hoping for a sensational result by Van Wely) by beating the native Dutch player in the last round.

Now, what about the other players?

Kramnik said that he intended "to check some new concepts and ideas and to experiment..." His experiments with White were a glorious +4 (he was only playing 1.e4), but his Black pieces were a disastrous –3. Meanwhile Vladimir was in the group of players at the level of –1 to +1 during the whole tournament and the culmination of all that was in round 11 when he lost to Van Wely.

Grishchuk was never himself in the tournament. This great fighter started with six draws in the first six rounds and then he began to look ominous with wins against Krasenkow and Shirov, but suddenly it all went astray with losses to Bareev and Polgar. He then made a short draw with Anand, followed by another victory against Radjabov and he had a long fight against Topalov in the last round with a hope to tie for third in case of a win. It was in fact only Topalov who could have won that game, but he missed his chance and eventually the game ended in a draw.

Ivanchuk was in a peaceful frame of mind almost throughout the whole tournament and he made 9 straight draws in the first rounds and most of them were in fact rather short at that. Finally in round 10 he had a short win (21 moves altogether) against Timman who played really badly in this tournament. Then he made another dull draw against Karpov, lost to Bareev and finally he won an understandably meaningful game against Ponomariov.

You can qualify as disappointments in this tournament Ponomariov, Karpov, and in a way, Topalov as well.

Ponomariov's unconvincing performance can be easily explained by the unsettled situation over his long awaited match against Kasparov. He in fact had only three points after round nine. A player from Odessa, Mikhail Golubev, came to support Ponomariov (who had only Komarov to help him until then) and suddenly Ponomariov won three games in a row. The last round witnessed something that was bound to happen sooner or later – Ivanchuk finally outplayed his compatriot. Remember their recent previous games: Ivanchuk won in the World Cup in the year 2000, then Ponomariov won twice in the final match of the World Championships (Moscow - 2002) and once again in the Linares tournament in 2002.

Orpov started with an excellent win against Krasenkow and then he made two draws, followed by a loss against Judit Polgar. Anand was the twelfth World

Champion's opponent in the next round. There is an impression that after their World Championships match in Lausanne in 1998 (when Karpov won 5-3), Vishy's dream-come-true is to beat Karpov as many times as possible everywhere in the world. The story repeated itself here, and the result of their games (draws not counted) after their notorious match has become 13 – 2 in favour of Anand.

Topalov was advancing in a strange way throughout the tournament – he followed a loss necessarily with a win in the very next round, and then repeated it again and again. He did that three times during the tournament!

Y. Vasiliev's interview with Anand

Q: Vishy, you were not helped this time by your coach Elizbar Ubilava? Why was that, is there anything wrong with him?

A: He is okay. I meet him almost every day in the fitness-centre since we are neighbours at the place we live. We simply decided that it might be useful for me to work on chess alone for a while and a temporary pause in our collaboration might be fruitful. Meanwhile his family wanted him home a little more often too. I felt here in Wijk aan Zee that I was missing a helping hand, since in several games, for example against Grishchuk, I failed to get an advantage with White. It would have been much easier with a coach, indeed...

Q: You showed some quite impressive results during the last year in rapid chess events and you started winning tournaments with seven hour time-controls this year. Which tempo of playing do you enjoy more?

A: Both time-controls are quite acceptable in a way. I love to vary rapid chess tournaments with tournaments with a classical time-limit.

Q: The Indian national team impressed everybody at the last Olympiad in Bled. Do you intend to play for your country anytime again?

A: I was thinking about that. It is quite possible that I might play for India at the next Olympiad in two years time. I would still like to consider it, but I would not like the Indian Chess Federation to put too much pressure on me about that.

Q: Do you still have some aims to realize in chess?

A: I continue to play as well as I can. I do not think about goals.

Y. Vasiliev's interview with Judit Polgar

Q: Do you think of this result as the most outstanding in your career?

A: I have already had plenty of results that have made me really happy. I can never possibly forget my victorious matches against Spassky and Karpov, or my first really great tournament in Madrid in 1994. Presently I feel mature and experienced and I appreciate the fact that my performance in Wijk aan Zee might be my most formidable result indeed.

Q: You managed to prove to men that you can not only compete against them but beat them too! Do you feel that you represent all women in this world in a field that men used to consider their privileged field of action?

A: Men should take me into account in the tournaments nowadays. I have been fighting for that for 20 years! I feel confident now, but I remember that I used to hear that I got invited more often to tournaments just because I was a woman! I am trying my best to play better than men and I think I have proved that I can play at least as well as them. Still I am just an exception to the rule.

Q: It looks like you have improved a lot lately. How did you manage to do that?

A: Earlier I used to try to play beautifully and that was my trademark: sacrifices, attacks and plenty of risk... I have gotten wiser now and I present the opportunity to take risks to men. It is more fruitful to counterattack than to attack with risky sacrifices.

1 **C12**

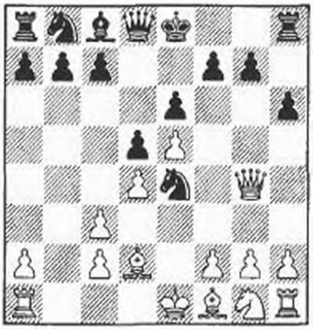
Anand – Radjabov

Round 1 11.01

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.♗g5 ♗b4

This is the MacCutcheon variation. The play is much sharper than in the lines after the exchange 4...dxe4 or 4...♗e7.

5.e5 h6 6.♗d2 ♗xc3 7.bxc3 ♘e4 8.♕g4



This is the basic position of the variation. Black must make an important decision what to do on the kingside. He can weaken his dark squares with g6, or forfeit his right to castle with ♔f8. It is clear that both lines have some drawbacks, but Black relies on his counterplay against White's queenside, which has been weakened after the exchange on c3.

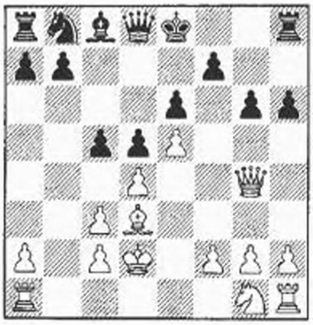
8...g6

The move 8...♔f8 avoids weakening the dark squares, but the black king remains on the side on which White attacks and that spells danger for Black in the future, for example: 9.♗d3 ♘xd2 10.♔xd2 c5 11.h4 c4 12.♗f1 ♘c6 13.♘e2 b5 14.♖h3 (this manoeuvre is quite typical for the French Defence, since the rook is quickly attacking along the 3rd rank Black's vulnerable squares – f7 and g7) 14...a5 15.a3 ♗d7 16.♘f4 ♖g8 17.♖f3 ♔e7 18.♘h5 b4 19.♕f4 bxc3+ 20.♔e1 ♗e8 21.♖xc3, Leko – Korchnoi, Essen 2002, White defends his queenside reliably and attacks on the kingside.

9.♗d3

White has a sharp line at his disposal: 9.♗c1 c5 10.♗d3 ♘xc3 11.dxc5 ♕a5 12.♗d2 ♕a4 13.h3 ♘e4 – and White must sacrifice his c5-pawn in order to preserve his dark-squared bishop.

9...♘xd2 10.♔xd2 c5



Black manages to exchange the dark-squared bishop of his opponent (that is an essential plus of that system in comparison to the Winawer variation – 3...♗b4) and now hopes to organize some counterplay against the white king stranded in the centre. He can exchange pawns on d4, place his rook on the c-file and play ♘b4; or pin the c3-pawn and break White's pawn chain exchanging on d4; and finally he can push c4 (ousting the white bishop from its active position and defending his kingside indirectly in that fashion) and then push b5-b4xc3.

11.♘f3

This move is possibly too academic. After the game Leko – Radjabov, Linares 2003, it is considered to be more dangerous for Black if White starts an immediate kingside offensive with 11.h4 ♗d7 12.h5 g5 13.f4↑ – that pawn move becomes impossible now, after the move in the game.

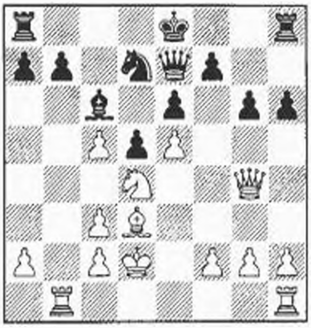
11...♗d7

This order of moves is the most elastic for Black. Contrary to the immediate ♘c6, Black preserves the possibility to develop his knight on d7 and it will defend from there the important f6-square and can be exploited later for queenside operations with ♘d7-b6-a4.

12.dxc5!?

This move has been quite popular in the French Defence. White opens the queenside and gets the d4-square for his knight, exerting some pressure along the b-file with his rooks. Meanwhile his c-pawns become terribly weak.

12...♕e7 13.♖ab1 ♗c6 14.♘d4 ♘d7



15.♖he1

This is the natural move. In the game Galego – Mi.Gurevich, Ohrid 2001, White played 15.♘xc6!? bxc6 16.♖b7 16...♕g5+ (it is possible that Black had to play 16...♕xc5, because it is not clear how White can exploit his lead in development 17.♕f4 g5 18.♕g3 ♕a5 19.h4 d4 20.hxg5 0–0–0 21.♖hb1 hxg5) 17.♕xg5 hxg5 18.h3 ♔d8 (This attempt to repel the rook from the 7th rank is wrong. Black should play instead 18...♘xe5!? 19.♖e1 ♘d7=) 19.c4 d4 20.c3 dxc3+ 21.♔xc3 ♖f8 22.♔d4, and White had the advantage, but as you saw Black hardly defended in the best possible way.

15...♘xc5

15...♕g5+ leads to an endgame that is better for White (moreover because of the weakening of the g5-pawn after the exchange of the queens) – 16.♕xg5 hxg5 17.h3 ♘xc5 18.♖b4 (it is also interesting for White to play 18.♖e3!?) 18...a5 19.♖bb1 ♔d7 20.♔e3± G.Garcia – Arboleda, Bogota 1992.

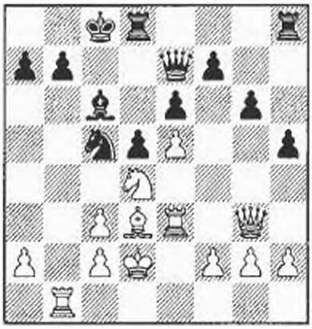
16.♖e3

This move can be considered as a novelty. In the game Comp BP – Schwartzman, Chicago 1994, the "silicon monster" went wrong with 16.♘xc6 bxc6 17.♖e3 ♖d8 18.♕f4 ♕g5 19.♕xg5 hxg5, and Black had no problems in that endgame without his bad bishop.

16...h5

Black has abandoned the idea to play 16...♕g5 on the previous move already.

17.♕g3 0–0–0



The situation has clarified more or less. White has powerful light pieces against a bad bishop for Black and the b-file to organize something against the enemy king. Black does not need to complain much about anything either. He must defend carefully against White's threats on the queenside and later the weakness of the white a and c-pawns will balance the chances.

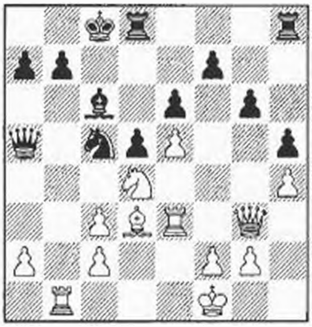
18.♔e1

In case of 18.♘xc6 bxc6 19.♕f4 Black can play even 19...♔d7!? – and the knight on c5 defends against the penetration of White's rooks.

18...♕c7

This is a purposeful manoeuvre – Black is defending his king and intends to probe White's weaknesses on the queenside.

19.h4 ♕a5 20.♔f1



20...♖d7

It was dangerous for Black to accept the sacrifice of the a2-pawn at that moment and later too: 20...♕xa2 21.♖ee1 ♘xd3 (it is even worse for Black to play 21...♕a5 22.♖a1 ♕c7 23.♖xa7, and he will suffer in a position with equal material, while 22...♕xc3? loses after 23.♘xc6 bxc6 24.♗a6+–) 22.♖a1 ♕c4 23.cxd3 ♕c5 (but not 23...♕xc3 24.♘xc6 bxc6 25.♖xa7, and the black king is beyond salvation) 24.♘xc6 bxc6 25.♖eb1↑ and White's initiative compensates amply the sacrificed pawn.

21.♕f4 ♖hd8

It was again too risky for Black to capture the pawn: 21...♕xa2 22.♖ee1 ♕a5 23.♖a1 ♕xc3 24.♖xa7 – and Black wins a pawn indeed, but his king remains quite exposed.

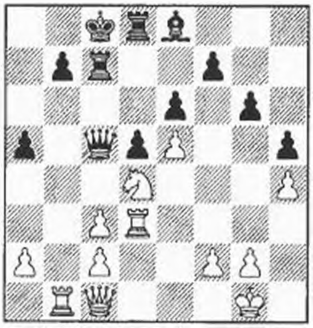
22.♔g1 ♘xd3

If 22...♕xa2 now, then 23.♖ee1 ♕a5 24.♖b4 (it is worse for White now to try 24.♖a1 ♕xc3 – and contrary to the previous variation the rook on e1 is hanging and White fails to capture on a7) 24...♕c7 25.♖a1, and once again the pressure along the open files is worth more than a pawn.

23.♖xd3

It looks better to me here for White to capture with the pawn – 23.cxd3 in order to try to obtain a positional compensation for one of the pawns a2 or c3.

23...♕c5 24.♖b4 a5 25.♖b1 ♖c7 26.♕c1 ♗e8



Black managed to defend all vulnerable squares in his position – b7, b5 and even f7. The strong knight on d4 maybe provides White with some symbolic advantage, but his every attempt to organize a break somewhere is extremely risky, because of his weaknesses on the queenside. The opponents repeated the moves several times – **27.♘b3 ♕b6 28.♘d4**, and agreed to a draw. ½ – ½

2 **B31**

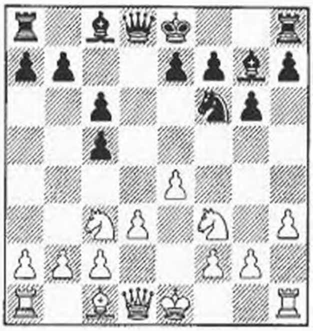
Grischuk – Van Wely

Round 1 11.01

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5

This is presently the main "anti-Sveshnikov" variation. White avoids the long theoretical discussions after 3.d4 and hopes to obtain a minimal advantage by occupying the centre with c3 and d4, or by exploiting his better pawn structure after the exchange on c6.

3...g6 4.♗xc6 dxc6 5.d3 ♗g7 6.h3 ♘f6 7.♘c3



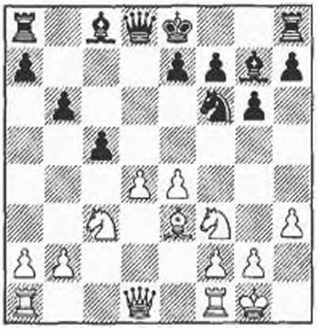
7...c4!?

This move sacrifices a pawn, but it is very unpleasant for White to accept that sacrifice. It is understandable that Black would like to exchange his doubled pawn in order to equalize, moreover that in principle he needs to open the position to make use of his bishop pair advantage. Otherwise the main line is – 7...♘d7 8.♗e3 e5 9.♕d2, and later White castles short and prepares f2-f4, or sometimes he castles long and exchanges (if he can) the dark-squared bishops and tries to attack with the g and h-pawns.

8.0–0

White accepted the sacrifice in one game – 8.dxc4, and after 8...♕xd1+ 9.♔xd1 ♗e6 10.c5 0–0–0+ 11.♔e1 ♘d7 12.♗e3 ♘e5 (12...♗xc3+ 13.bxc3 ♘f6 14.♘d2±) 13.♘d4 ♘c4 14.♘xe6 fxe6 15.♘d1 ♘xe3 16.fxe3 ♖hf8 17.♖b1 ♗e5 18.♔e2 he managed gradually to consolidate his position and realized his material advantage Yemelin – Shvedov, Novgorod 1999. The other possibility: 8.d4 b5 9.a3 c5 10.e5 ♘d5 11.♘e4 cxd4 12.♕xd4 ♗b7 13.0–0 0–0 14.♘c5 ♗c6 15.♕h4 ♘c7⇄ led to a double-edged game in Bologan – Komarov, Bordeaux 2003.

8...cxd3 9.cxd3 c5 10.♗e3 b6 11.d4



11...cxd4

Van Wely was obviously not happy with the outcome of the opening in this game and he tried 11...♗b7, instead of exchanging on d4, in his game against Ponomariov in round 10 of the same tournament. Nevertheless, after 12.d5 0–0 13.♕b3 ♕c8 14.♖ad1 e6 15.♗g5 exd5 16.e5 c4 17.♕c2 ♘d7 18.♘xd5 he failed to equalize, Ponomariov – Van Wely, Wijk aan Zee 2003.

12.♗xd4 0–0

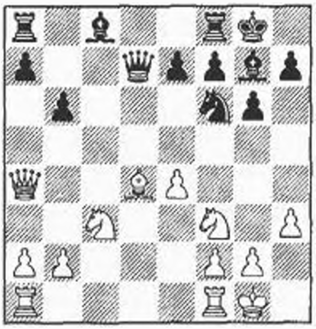
Black has the bishop pair advantage and he has no pawn weaknesses, but he still has some problems. It is not clear where he should put his queen, because White is ahead in development and occupies quickly the open c and d-files. Generally speaking, Black has not equalized yet.

13.♕a4

White can also play 13.♕e2!?, not letting Black find a safe haven for his queen on b7 as in the game. After say: 13...♗b7 14.♖fd1 ♕e8 15.♖ac1± White is slightly better.

13...♕d7

It was also possible for Black to play 13...♗b7 14.♖fe1±.



14.♕b4

It looked like Black would have serious problems after the trade of the queens: 14.♕xd7 ♗xd7 (or 14...♘xd7 15.♗xg7 ♔xg7 16.♖fd1± – Black has not completed his development yet, while the white rooks occupy the open files) 15.e5 ♘h5 (or 15...♘e8 16.♘d5 e6

17.♘e7+ ♔h8 18.♖fc1 and Black can hardly connect his rooks anytime soon, because his knight is stuck on the e8-square) 16.♗e3 f5 17.♖fd1±, and Black is still too far from equality due to the placement of his knight at the edge of the board.

14...♕d6 15.♕b5

In case of 15.♕xd6 exd6 the weaknesses on d6 and e4 are nearly balancing each other.

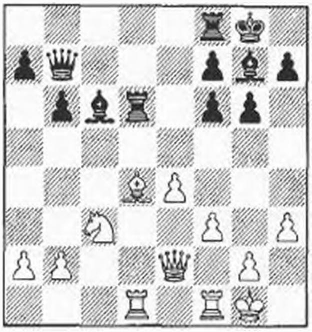
15...♕d7 16.♕e2

It was worth considering the trade on d7 once again.

16...♕b7 17.♖ad1 ♗d7 18.♘e5 ♖ad8 19.♘g4

White hopes to preserve some opening advantage in that fashion. In case of the exchange on g4 Black loses his bishop pair advantage and after the line in the game he has to play with doubled pawns.

19...♗c6 20.♘xf6+ exf6 21.f3 ♖d6



Black has sufficient counterchances despite the weakness on f6. It is dangerous for White to remain on d4 with his bishop, because it might get pinned along the d-file and after its retreat White has the pawn-break f6-f5 to worry about.

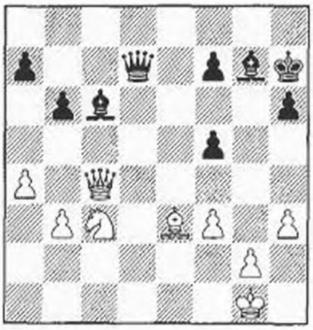
22.♗e3 ♖fd8 23.♖xd6 ♖xd6 24.♖d1 ♕d7 25.♖xd6 ♕xd6 26.♕a6

White is trying to attack the a7-pawn, because if Black manages to play f6-f5 and recapture on f5 with a piece, his position will be superior.

26...♕d7 27.a4 f5! 28.exf5 gxf5

Black is not afraid of weakening his pawns on the kingside because of his powerful couple of bishops.

29.♕c4 h6 30.b3 ♔h7



31.♘e2

The logical move 31.♔f2? (king to the centre) is a blunder because of the surprising 31...f4! 32.♗xf4 ♕d4+, and Black suddenly wins a piece.

31...♕d1+ 32.♔f2 ♗d5 33.♕f4 ♕c2 34.♔g3

White is threatening to play ♘d4, so Black is practically forced to capture on e2 and that leads to a draw by a perpetual.

34...♕xe2 35.♕xf5+ ♔g8 36.♕c8+ ♔h7 37.♕f5+ ♔g8 38.♕c8+ ♔h7 ½ – ½

3 **B67**

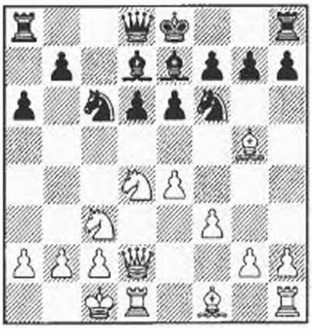
Kramnik – Ivanchuk
Round 1 11.01
Notes by V. Beim

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4

♘f6 5.♘c3 ♘c6 6.♗g5 e6 7.♕d2 a6 8.0-0-0 ♗d7 9.f3

White's other possible line here is 9.f4.

9...♗e7



10.♔b1

This move is not very popular. White plays here much more often 10.h4 h6 11.♗e3 h5 with a sharp and complex game.

10...b5 11.♘xc6

White can play here again 11.h4 if he plans to complicate the position.

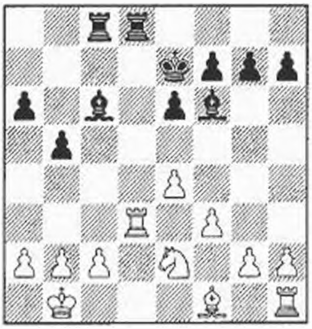
11...♗xc6 12.♗xf6

This exchange has been tried a couple of times between some not so famous chess players and Black has captured invariably with the pawn.

12...♗xf6

Ivanchuk's move can formally be considered to be a novelty, but it is in fact the most obvious and natural move for an experienced player. I believe it to be the main reason that the whole line is not quite popular among players that really play for a win with White in this variation. I suspect that Kramnik was not in a very fighting mood that day...

13.♕xd6 ♕xd6 14.♖xd6 ♖c8 15.♘e2 ♔e7 16.♖d3 ♖hd8

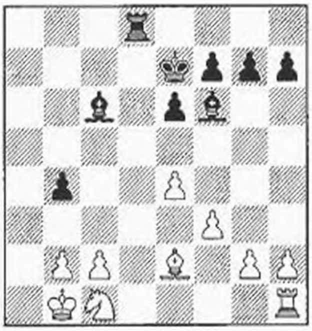


Positions of the type that we have on the board are well known in the Sicilian Defence. White's extra pawn is amply compensated by Black's active pieces and his bishop pair. We have seen in plenty of games that Black's initiative has sometimes even prevailed over White's minute material advantage. The game Kamsky – Kramnik, Monaco, 1996 is an instructive example in that aspect.

17.♘c1 a5 18.a3

White should avoid the creation of pawn weaknesses because the black bishops then will have juicy targets to attack.

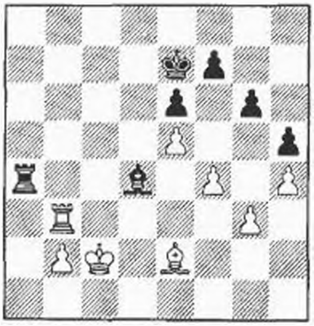
18...b4 19.axb4 axb4 20.♖xd8 ♖xd8 21.♗e2



21...h5!

This is another instructive moment. In case of 21...♖d2 22.♖d1 ♖xd1 23.♗xd1 White remains slightly better. The active side should try to enlarge the front of actions. Black is threatening to occupy more space with h5-h4. The game that we are following is very instructive although it is not spectacular at all. It illustrates the typical methods of playing in standard positions and on top of that – by two of the world's top-grandmasters.

22.♘d3 ♖d4 23.h4 ♗b5 24.g3 b3 25.♖e1 ♗xd3 26.♗xd3 ♗e5 27.f4 ♗d6 28.♖e3 bxc2+ 29.♔xc2 ♗c5 30.♖f3 ♖a4 31.e5 ♗d4 32.♗e2 g6 33.♖b3



32...♗f2!

Both players are playing very precisely. Black is now emphasizing another typical fine point: his bishop keeps attacking an already fixed pawn chain. It was time to agree to a draw already but the game went on:

34.♖f3 ♗e1 35.♗d3 ♔f8 36.♖e3 ♗f2 37.♖f3 ♗e1 38.♔d1 ♖a1+ 39.♔e2 ♗b4 40.♗b5

After 40.♗c4 ♖g1 41.♖b3 (41.♔f2 ♗c5+) 41...♗e1 42.♖b8+ ♔g7 43.♖b7 ♔f8 White has no available way to improve his position.

40...♖a2 41.♖b3 ♗a3! ½ – ½

4 E12

Krasenkow – Karpov

Round 1 11.01

Notes by A.Khalifman

1.♘f3 ♘f6 2.d4 e6 3.c4 b6 4.♘c3 ♗b7 5.a3

The Petrosian system in the Queen's Indian Defence enables White to steer the game into a complex and sharp fight right from the beginning. Michal wanted just that in the encounter that we are going to see together.

5...d5 6.cxd5 ♘xd5 7.♕c2 ♘xc3 8.bxc3 ♘d7

The other possible line here just transposes to the game 8...c5 9.e4 ♘d7. Black plays sometimes 8...Be7 and he attacks White's centre with his c-pawn only after castling short.

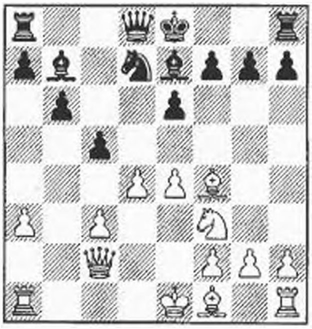
9.e4 c5 10.♗f4!?

White delays the development of his kingside indeed, but does not let the black queen to the c7-square. In case of 10.♗d3 ♕c7!= the tournament practice shows that Black equalizes comparatively easily.

10...♗e7

Some time ago the opening arguments in this line were centered around: 10...cxd4 11.cxd4 ♖c8 12.♕b3 ♗e7 (12...♗xe4?! 13.♗a6↑) 13.♗d3 ♘f6 (13...0–0 14.0–0±) 14.♕b5+ (14.♕b1 0–0 15.♗d2 ♘e8 16.0–0 ♘d6 17.e5 ♘f5 18.♗xf5 exf5 19.♕xf5 ♗xf3 20.♕xf3 ♕xd4 21.♕b7 ♕xe5 22.♕xa7 ♗c5= Cramling – Karpov, Oropesa del Mar 1996) 14...♕d7 15.♘e5 ♕xb5 16.♗xb5+ ♔f8 17.f3 ♘e8. Gradually it became clear that the endgame after 18.♗d7! ♖d8 19.♗c6 ♗c8 (19...♗xc6 20.♘xc6 ♖d7 21.♔e2±) 20.♗e3 f6 21.♘d3 ♗d7

22.♗xd7 ♖xd7 23.♔e2 ♔f7 24.♖hc1 (24.a4 ♘d6 25.a5 ♘c4⇄) 24...♘d6 25.a4 ♖c8 (Black does not equalize either after 25...♘b7 26.♖c3 ♘a5 27.g4 ♗d6 28.h3 ♖c7 29.♖xc7+ ♗xc7 30.♖c1 ♗b8 31.f4± as it was played in the game Khalifman – Tiviakov, Elista 1998) 26.♖xc8 ♘xc8 27.♖c1 ♘d6 28.g4!± provided White with somewhat better chances as it was in the game Timman – Karpov, Jakarta (m/19) 1993.



11.d5

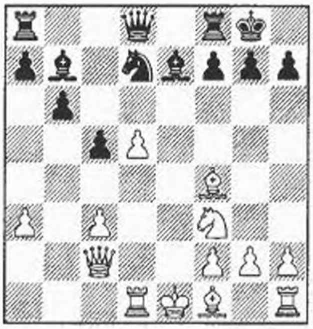
This is a very important decision. White begins some active operations before the completion of his development. It looked much more natural for him to play 11.♗d3. It is possible that Michal refrained from that move, because he was afraid of some opening surprise by the ex-world champion. For example after 11...♕c8 12.♕a4 (in case of 12.0–0 Black can enter a favourable endgame with – 12...cxd4 13.cxd4 ♕xc2 14.♗xc2= as it was played in the game Krasenkow – Gelfand, Bled 2002) 12...a6 13.0–0 b5 14.♕d1 ♘b6!? (14...0–0 15.a4±) 15.♘e5 (15.♗g5 ♕d8! 16.♗xe7 ♕xe7) 15...0–0 16.♕h5 f6 17.♘g4∞ and there arose a very sharp position with mutual chances in the game Lautier – Karpov, Monaco 1999.

11...exd5 12.exd5 0–0

It is very dangerous for Black to capture the white pawn with 12...♗xd5?!, since after 13.0–0–0! his pieces are unavoidably pinned quite perilously along the open d-file. For example 13...♗xf3 (13...♗c6 ? 14.♘e5! ♕c8 15.♗a6! ♕xa6 16.♘xc6 ♕xa3+ 17.♔b1+–; 13...♗e6 14.♗b5 a6 15.♗xd7+ ♗xd7 16.♘e5 ♖a7 17.♘c6±) 14.gxf3 a6 15.♗h3↑ and White would have a dangerous initiative on the light squares.

13.♖d1

White can also defend his d5-pawn with the move 13.c4. In this case, after 13...♗f6!? (Black can equalize with 13...b5 14.♗d3 ♘f6= too.) 14.♖d1 ♖e8+ 15.♗e2 ♕e7 16.♖d2 g5!↑ Black even managed to seize the initiative in the game Miniboeck – Kiss, Budapest 1987. It should have become clear to you by now that White needs to play the move ♖a1-d1 anyway.



13...♖e8!?

Black must create quickly some active counterplay in the next few moves otherwise White will have much better chances, after he completes the development of his kingside, due to his powerful passed central pawn. Look for example what happened after: 13...♗f6

14.♗e2 ♖e8 15.0–0 ♘e5 16.♗xe5 ♗xe5 17.♗b5 ♖e7 18.♗c6± in the game Gaprindashvili – Akhmilovskaya, Tskhaltubo 1988, in which Black played too passively.

It used to be considered as Black's best variation the sharp line: 13...g5 14.♗e3 g4 15.♘d2 f5, as it was played in the game Lputian – Adorjan, Hastings 1986. This evaluation was confirmed in the recent game Radjabov – Kramnik (Linares 2003) – see Game 130. It is however quite possible that Krasenkow had prepared an improvement somewhere. For example it is possible for White to try 14.♗g3!? with the idea after 14...g4 15.♘g1 ♖e8 (15...f5 16.♗d3! f4?! 17.♗xh7+ ♔h8 18.♗f5±) 16.♗e2 ♗f6 to play 17.h3!↑ and to open the h-file in order to organize an attack against the black king. In answer to 14.♗g3!? Black should probably play 14...f5 15.♗d3 (White can also test here 15.♗c4!?), and not 15...g4? 16.♘g1 f4 17.♗xh7+ ♔h8 18.♗f5, which only transposes to the line that we have mentioned before, as it was already tested in practice in the game Krasenkow – Schandorff, Esbjerg 2003, but 15...f4! 16.♗xh7+ ♔h8 17.♗f5 ♔g7! which leads to a very sharp and unclear position.

14.♗e2 c4

This is a quite purposeful move. Karpov does not intend to let his opponent defend his d5-pawn reliably with a move like c3-c4.

15.0–0

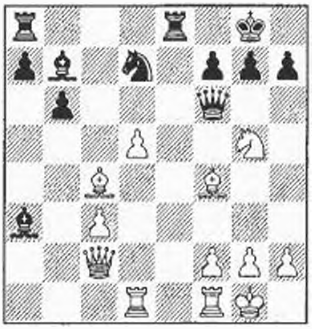
The too eager early advance of the passed d-pawn after: 15.d6 ♗f6 16.0–0 ♗c4 17.♕b2 ♖c8 18.♘d4 ♘e5↑ would have led to a position in which Black's pieces would have been very active. The reason for that is more than evident. The white d5-pawn restricts the activity of Black's light-squared bishop on b7 considerably.

15...♗xa3

This is probably the best for Black. In case of 15...b5 16.a4 a6 17.axb5 axb5 18.♘d4↑ the position would have remained approximately equal, but White might still have some initiative.

16.♗xc4 ♕f6 17.♘g5

Both opponents are fighting for the initiative. After 17.♗g5 ♕d6 18.♗h4 ♕c7= the position is quite original but again more or less balanced. Michal is sacrificing a piece with the move in the game. White had another possibility, along with the relatively risky move in the game, in order to fight for the advantage (and maybe even more to the point...) and that was: 17.♗g3 ♗d6 18.♗b5 ♗xg3 19.fxg3!?, White's pressure in the centre and on the kingside then might gradually become very annoying for Black.



17...♘f8!

Black refuses to accept the gift and quite reasonably at that. After 17...♕xf4 18.♕xh7+ ♔f8 19.♕h8+ (19.♖fe1? ♖e5∓) 19...♔e7 20.♖fe1+ ♔d6 (20...♘e5

21.♕xg7 ♗d6 22.♘xf7! ♕xf7 23.♖xe5+ ♗xe5 24.d6+–) 21.♖xe8 ♖xe8 22.♕xe8 ♕xg5 23.♗b5 it becomes clear that despite the approximate material equality Black is doomed to failure, because of the exposed situation of his king. For example after 23...♕e7 (23...♕g4 24.f3 ♕f5 25.♖d3 ♗c5+ 26.♔f1+– Δ27.g4!) 24.♗xd7 ♕xd7 25.♕f8+ ♕e7 (25...♔c7 26.♕xa3+–) 26.♕xe7+ ♔xe7 27.♖a1! ♗c5 28.♖xa7+– White is going to win a piece thanks to the pin.

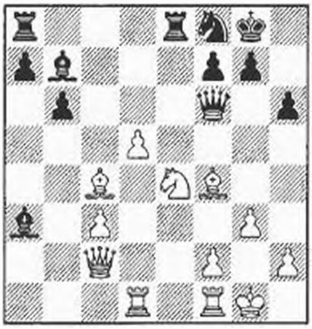
18.g3

This is weakening the light squares on the kingside. It is however quite evident that White is really insistent on preserving his bishop on the b8-h2 diagonal. In case of 18.♗d2 h6= Black would have been at least equal.

18...h6!?

It is not easy to suggest anything better for Black here. For example after 18...♗d6 White plays 19.♘e4 ♕g6 20.♗xd6 ♕xe4 21.♕xe4 ♖xe4 22.♗d3± and obtains the bishop pair advantage. In case of 18...♖ac8 19.♗b5 ♖ed8 20.♕a2 ♗c5 (20...♖xc3?? 21.♘e4+–; 20...♕xc3? 21.d6±) 21.♘e4± Black is forced to part with his dark-squared bishop and that makes White's position clearly preferable.

19.♘e4



19...♕f5!

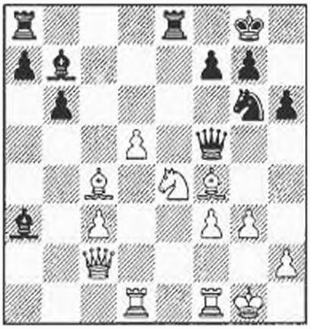
Black pins the white knight with his queen from the f5-square quite correctly and leaves the g6-square for the knight.

20.f3

White is now forced to weaken his kingside position even more in order to protect his e4-knight. In case he had done that with the move 20.♖fe1?, then after 20...♘g6 21.♗c7 (21.♗b5 ♖e7–+) 21...♖ec8 22.d6 ♘e5–+ he would not have been able to defend against Black's numerous threats at all.

20...♘g6

Black's alternative to the move in the game was the line: 20...♗c5+!? 21.♔h1 ♘g6 and it would have prevented the retreat of the white bishop to the e3-square. In that case after: 22.♗c7 ♖ac8 (22...♖ec8 23.d6∞) 23.♗b5 ♗xd5 24.♗xe8 ♖xe8 25.♘f6+ ♕xf6 26.♖xd5 ♖c8 27.♖f5 ♕e6 28.♗f4 a5≅ Black would have an ample compensation for his minimal material deficit, because the white pieces would have been very discoordinated.



21.♗c7

Black now has some additional tactical possibilities because both white bishops are placed on the c-file and they are defenceless too. It seemed better for White to play 21.♗e3!? ♘e5 (21...♖ad8 22.♕a2 ♘e5 23.♗e2=) 22.♗e2 ♗f8 23.c4= with an approximately equal position. Meanwhile Michal evidently wanted to provoke some tactical complications, because he had the reputation to be an excellent tactician.

21...♖ac8!

The ex-world champion had to anticipate White's next move – no doubt about that. The seemingly less ambitious move 21...♘e5 after 22.♗e2 ♕d7 (22...♖ac8 23.♕a4 ♗f8 24.♗d6±) 23.d6∞ would have led to at least as complicated position as that one in the game. Black would need to play very precisely then. For example the active move 23...♘g4?! after 24.♕b3 ♗xe4 25.fxe4 (25.♕xa3? ♗c6 26.♖d2 ♘e3 27.♖b1 ♘d5+) 25...♗c5+ 26.♔h1 would lead to a position in which Black's threats turn out to be just illusory. For example after 26...♘f2+ 27.♖xf2 ♗xf2 28.♖f1 (28.♗b5 ♕g4 29.♔g2! ♕xe4+ 30.♔xf2 ♕e3=) 28...♗xg3 29.♖xf7! (29.hxg3? ♕h3+ 30.♔g1 ♕xg3+ 31.♔h1 ♖xe4–+) 29...♕e6 (29...♕xf7 30.♗c4+–) 30.♕xe6 ♖xe6 31.♖d7± Black's position would be very difficult.

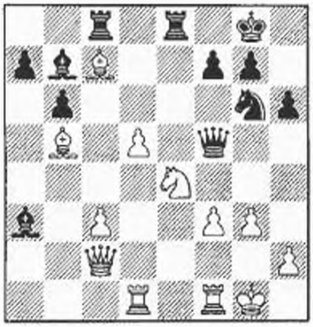
The other possible attack against the white bishop with the move: 21...♖ec8 is not dangerous at all and after 22.♕a4 ♖xc7 (22...♗f8? 23.g4+–) 23.♕xa3 ♘e5 24.♗e2= it leads only to equality.

22.♗b5!

It turns out now that White does not need to protect his dark-squared bishop. The line 22.♕a4?, would not work, since after 22...♖xe4! 23.fxe4 ♗c5+ 24.♔g2 ♕xe4–+ Black would be winning.

The defence of the bishop with 22.d6 would enable Black after 22...♘e5!? (the other possibility – 22...♗c5+ 23.♔h1 ♗xd6!?, after 24.g4 ♗xe4 25.fxe4 ♕xf1+ 26.♗xf1 ♗xc7∞ was leading to a position with a quite non-standard material ratio) to obtain a better position, because his light-squared bishop would be dangerously poised for an attack against the white king. For example after 23.♕e2?! Black can play 23...♗c5+ 24.♘xc5 (25.♔h1 ♘xf3! 26.d7 ♗xe4 27.dxe8♕+ ♖xe8→) and now with the help of the spectacular tactical strike 24...♘xf3+!, followed by 25.♖xf3 ♕xc5+ 26.♕f2 ♕xc4∓ Black not only wins a pawn, but preserves a powerful initiative on the light squares.

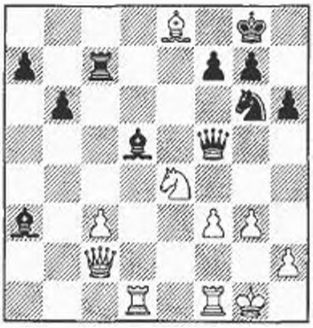
If White plays 23.♗e2, instead of 23.♕e2, then after 23...♗c5+ 24.♔h1 a6!?∓ Black's chances are preferable.



22...♖xc7!?

The essence of White's idea was the fact that after 22...♖f8?? 23.g4!+– Black's queen was suddenly getting trapped. Karpov sacrifices the exchange for a pawn now and forces his opponent to start defending. Black also had another possibility to exploit the similar idea to sacrifice the exchange with 22...♗xd5!? 23.♗xe8 ♗c5+ 24.♔h1 ♖xe8, because after 25.♘f6+ ♕xf6 26.♖xd5 ♖c8 27.♖f5 ♕e6 28.♗f4 a5=∞ his compensation for the sacrificed material would have been sufficient, since White's pieces (and particularly the rook on f5 and his dark-squared bishop) would be misplaced.

23.♗xe8 ♗xd5



24.♘f6+?

White's wish to get rid of one of the black bishops is quite understandable, but he loses another pawn now and the black rook joins in the attack against the white king too. It seemed better for White to play 24.♕d3 ♗e6 (24...♗b7? 25.♕d8 ♖c8 26.♗xf7! ♔xf7 27.♕d7+–; 24...♗a8? 25.♕d8 ♖c8 26.♗xf7+! ♔xf7 27.♖d7+–; 24...♗c4 25.♕d8 ♕e5 26.♖fe1±) 25.♗b5 (25.♕d8?? ♖c8–+) 25...♗e7=∞ and although Black preserves very good compensation for the sacrificed material, he does not have any decisive threats yet.

24...♕xf6 25.♖xd5 ♖xc3 26.♕e4?

White is definitely lost after that move. It was not so easy to find a satisfactory defence for him, though...For instance after 26.♕d1 ♘e5 27.♗b5 (in case of 27.f4 ♘c4–+ the black knight is headed for the e3-square with decisive threats) 27...♖xf3 (27...♘xf3+? 28.♔g2 ♘h4+ 29.♔h1 ♘f3 30.♗e2+–) 28.♖e1 ♖f5∓ Black already has a material advantage as well.

White probably had to play 26.♕f5!? with the idea to try to simplify the position by exchanging queens.

26...♗c5+ 27.♔g2

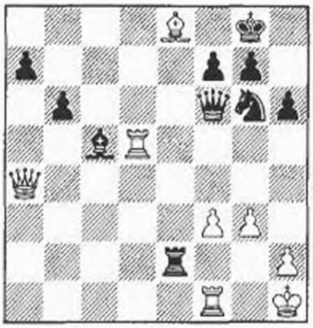
After 27.♖xc5 ♖xc5–+ White would not save the game having two pawns down.

27...♖e3 28.♕a4

This retreat is forced otherwise White loses his bishop.

28...♖e2+ 29.♔h1

In case of 29.♔h3 ♕e6+ 30.g4 ♕xd5 White loses a rook.



29...♖e1! 0–1

This is the decisive tactical strike. After 30.♔g2 (30.♖xe1 ♕xf3#; 30.♖d1 ♕xf3#) 30...♖xf1 31.♔xf1 ♕xf3+ 32.♔e1 ♕xd5–+ Black remains with an extra piece and three extra pawns.

5 **B33**

Ju.Polgar – Topalov

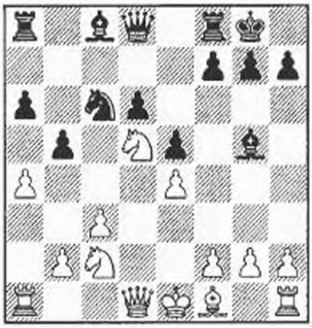
Round 1 11.01

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 e5 6.♘db5 d6

7.♗g5 a6 8.♘a3 b5 9.♘d5

White's hopes to achieve an opening advantage in the last several years have been mostly connected with the sharp line 9.♗xf6 gxf6 10.♘d5.

9...♗e7 10.♗xf6 ♗xf6 11.c3 ♗g5 12.♘c2 0–0 13.a4



This is the main branch of this line of the Sveshnikov variation. White has occupied the d5-outpost, but it is not enough and he wants to shatter additionally Black's queenside.

13...bxa4 14.♖xa4 a5 15.♗c4

White's other popular choice here is – 15.♗b5.

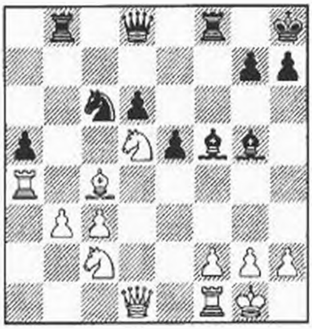
15...♖b8 16.b3 ♔h8 17.0–0 f5

Black has tried here many times in practice 17...g6 (in order to be able to capture on f5 with the pawn, retaining control over the e4-square) followed by f5, ♗h6 and ♕h4. Kasparov and Kramnik played like that with Black. The move in the game enjoys popularity at the highest level as well.

18.exf5 ♗xf5

(diagram)

The game is already out of the opening into the middle game, but it is still theory. The evaluation is favourable enough for Black. White's knight on d5 is excellent, but it is not good enough to win the game. The pawn weaknesses of both sides balance each other – Black has weak pawns on a5 and d6, while White should worry about b3 and potentially f2, since his dark-squared bishop is missing. In general, Black's counterplay is good enough for equality.



19.♕e2

White plays more often here 19. ♘ce3, but Black has good prospects after that too, for example: 19...♗g6 20.♗e2 ♗f7 21.♘c4 e4 (This move has been recommended by Kramnik – Black is looking for counterplay despite breaking his pawn chain.) 22.♔h1 ♗g8 23.♖a3 ♘e7 24.♘ce3 ♘xd5 25.♘xd5 ♖f5 (this is a typical manoeuvre for Black – he wants to either oust the white knight from d5, or trade it) 26.c4 ♗xd5 27.cxd5 ♕b6, and it was time for White to worry about equalizing Leko – Gelfand, Polanica Zdroj 1998.

19...♗g6

This move is formally a novelty. It has been played often in answer to the immediate 19.♘ce3 – so that Black remains with his bishop on the good b1–h7 diagonal and avoids being attacked by the knight on e3. White did not get any advantage after the usual move 19...♕d7, for example: 20.♘ce3 (or 20.

♘de3 ♗e6 21.♖d1 ♗xe3 22.♘xe3 ♖xb3 23.♗xe6 ♕xe6 24.♕c4 ♕xc4 25.♖xc4 ♘a7=, and White had to think about equalizing Hamdouchi – Kasimdzhanov, Hyderabad 2002) 20...♗e6 21.♖d1 ♗d8 22.♖a2 ♕f7 23.♕d3 ♕h5 24.♘f1 e4 25.♕c2 ♗h4 26.♘g3 ♗xg3 27.hxg3 ♘e5 and Black had an excellent counterplay in the game Geller – Sveshnikov, Tbilisi 1978.

20.♗d3

This move repels the black bishop, but weakens White's set-up in the centre and on the queenside.

20...♗e8

Black should avoid trading the light-squared bishops, because he can organize his counterplay much easier with the bishops present on the board.

21.♖a3 ♘e7 22.♗e4 ♘xd5 23.♗xd5 ♕b6

Black is eyeing the vulnerable f2-pawn. In general the results of the opening battle are very good for Black. White's forces are not well coordinated and he cannot attack anything effectively.

24.b4

This move weakens the a6-f1 diagonal, because White cannot cover it reliably now and that makes the f2-pawn even more attractive for Black to attack. It was safer for White to play 24.c4!? with approximately equal chances.

24...axb4 25.♘xb4

White must defend very carefully after 25.cxb4 ♖c8 (threatening ♗b5) 26.♖a5 (it is also too risky for White to play 26.♗c4 ♖xc4 27.♕xc4 ♗b5) 26...♗g6 27.♗e4 ♗xe4 28.♕xe4 ♖f4 29.♕d3 ♖fc4↑, and White's pieces are misplaced (the knight as well as the rook on a5) and because of that his dominance over the d5-square is immaterial.

25...♕c5

Black is threatening to capture on b4 and d5.

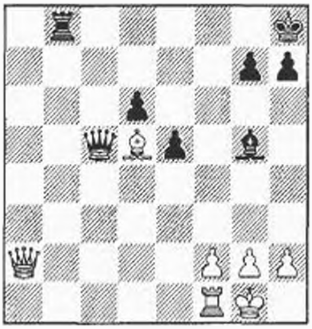
26.♕a2 ♗b5 27.c4

White gives up a pawn quite correctly in order to reduce the number of the attacking pieces. The other possibility 27.♖e1 could lead to difficulties for White after 27...e4 threatening e3, and White cannot capture that pawn 28.♖xe4? (if White captures that pawn with his bishop, then the pin along the e-file will be decisive) because of 28...♗e3 and Black has a tremendous attack, since White cannot capture on e3, because of the checkmate on f1.

27...♗xc4 28.♗xc4 ♖xb4 29.♖a8

White needs to reduce the number of the remaining rooks because the defence of the f2-pawn would be easier then.

29...♖bb8 30.♖xb8 ♖xb8 31.♗d5



White's defensive resources seem to be good enough for a draw despite the one pawn deficit. Black's central pawns are reliably blocked on the light squares and White can easily defend his only weakness on f2. The black king is even more vulnerable than its white counterpart and White can organize some counterattack along the 7th and 8th rank just in case.

31...g6 32.g3 ♔g7 33.♔g2 ♕d4 34.♗c6 ♕c5 35.♗f3 ♖e8 36.♖b1 e4

½ – ½

Black is in fact losing a pawn with his last move – after 37.♖b7+ ♔h6 38.♗xe4 ♖xe4 39.♕f7= he has to give back his bishop on e7 and accordingly the opponents agreed to a draw.

6 **B12**

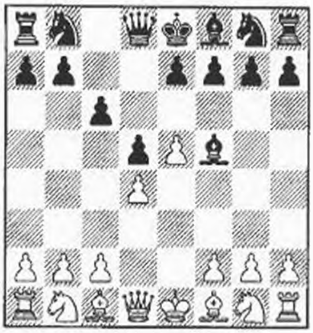
Ponomariov – Bareev

Round 1 11.01

Notes by S. Shipov

Ruslan beat Evgeny in the World Championship knock–out a year earlier. Now the older brother in arms took his revenge.

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 ♗f5



4.h4

White experiments a lot in this system lately. The point is that in the main line after 4.♘c3 Black's position is considered to be very solid. White's pawn move conceals the intention to trap the bishop after the mistaken 4...e6? 5.g4 ♗e4 6.f3 ♗g6 7.h5, so Black must play first:

4...h5

There was an exchange of future outposts – g5 for White and g4 for Black.

5.c4

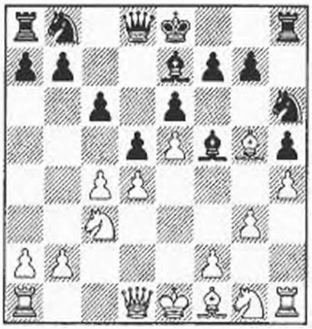
White pushes his c–pawn forward before developing his knight to c3. Naturally Philidor would have been quite happy about that, but White's d4 pawn feels very sad instead...!

5...e6 6.♘c3 ♗e7 7.g3 ♘h6

If White exchanges pawns on d5 Black should better capture with the c6–pawn because otherwise he fails to block the centre reliably, for example: 7...♘d7 8.cxd5 exd5 9.♗d3 ♗xd3 10.♕xd3 ♘h6 (10...♘f8 11.f4 g6 12.f5!) 11.♘ge2 ♘f8 12.♘f4 g6 13.e6! and White had a great advantage, Minasian – Barash, Philadelphia 1999.

8.♗g5

This exchange is the key of the future plan of White to play on the dark squares.



8...dxc4!N

This seems to be a very good novelty because Black exposes the d4–pawn. The game Minasian – Savchenko, Elista 1998 continued 8...♗xg5 9.hxg5 ♕xg5 10.♖xh5 ♕e7 11.cxd5 exd5 (11...cxd5 12.♘b5!) 12.f4 ♗g6 13.♖h3 ♘d7 14.♗d3 0–0–0 15.♗xg6 fxg6 16.♕d3 g5 17.0–0–0 gxf4 18.gxf4 ♖hf8 19.♘ge2 ♘f5 20.♖g1 and Black failed to equalize.

9.♗xe7

In case of 9.♗xc4 ♗xg5 10.hxg5 ♕xg5 White can recapture on h5 but Black's position is solid.

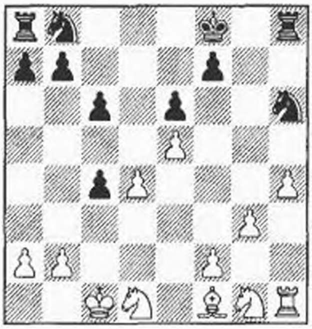
9...♕xe7 10.♕xh5

This is a sharp line. White can play the more restrained and reliable 10.♗xc4, but then Black reposts 10...♕b4 and White is forced to go into an endgame with 11.♕b3, because after 11.♗b3 ♘d7 12.♘ge2 ♖d8! his centre is very vulnerable. Black preserves the option to play c6–c5 at some moment.

10...♕b4 11.0–0–0

This is an interesting sacrifice of the exchange. The other way to defend the b2–pawn for White has its drawbacks – 11.♕e2 ♘d7 12.♘f3 0–0–0 – and Black exerts pressure against White's centre.

11...♗g4 12.♕g5 ♗xd1 13.♕xg7 ♕f8 14.♕xf8+ ♔xf8 15.♘xd1



White remained with a pawn for the exchange as a result of the forced tactical operation. He will have an excellent compensation if he manages to develop and consolidate because the position is rather closed and the rooks do not have enough scope for action. Unless...

15...c5!

This decision is quite thematic and up to the point. Black must open the game outright!

16.dxc5 ♘d7 17.c6

This pawn is doomed anyway and it is used to compromise Black's pawn structure a bit. After 17.♘e3 ♖c8 Black is slightly better.

17...bxc6 18.f4!?

On the contrary White is trying to stabilize the pawn structure so presently everything seems to be quite logical. The line 18.♘f3 ♘g4 19.♗xc4 ♘dxe5 20.♘xe5 ♘xe5 21.♗e2 leads to only a slight edge for Black.

18...♖g8

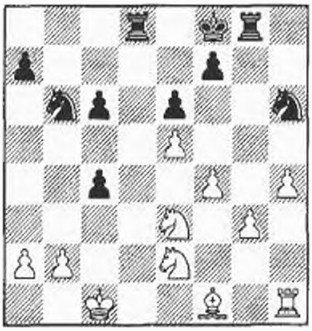
The weakness of the g3–pawn is Black's main trump in this position.

19.♘e2 ♖d8

19...♘f5 is not dangerous for White because of 20.♖g1 followed by ♗f1–h3.

20.♘e3 ♘b6

Black could have played 20...♘c5! with the idea 21.♘xc4 ♘f5 22.♖g1 ♘e4 and White's defence succumbs.



21.♗h3?!

This is the beginning of the end. 21.♗g2 was much stronger, for example 21...♘d5 (or 21...♖d3 22.♘f1 and later White is going to repel the annoying rook with ♗e4) 22.♖d1 ♔e7 23.♘xc4 ♘f5 24.♗f3 ♘xg3 25.♘d4! with mutual chances.

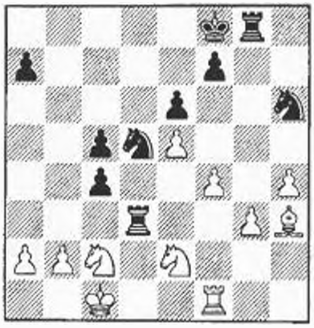
21...♖d3 22.♘c2?!

22.♘f1 seemed to be more stubborn.

22...c5!

Paring the white knights (forgive my French...).

23.♖f1 ♘d5



24.f5

This is out of desperation because White has no more useful moves left! If he remains passive Black can simply give back the exchange on g3 with a big advantage.

24...exf5 25.♗xf5 ♖e3!

This is just beautiful – some minor tactics serving the major strategy!

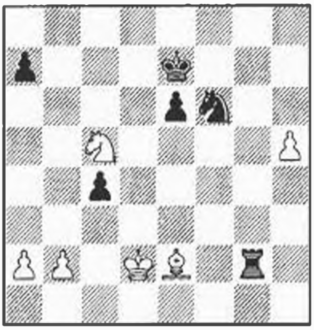
26.♘xe3 ♘xe3 27.♗h3 ♘xf1 28.♗xf1

The exchange changes its master just like an important military fortification during a hard fought battle. Black still has to say his final words, though...

28...♘f5 29.♘c3 ♘e3 30.♗e2 ♖xg3

Now both sides are occupied with the annihilation of pawns but White fails to exchange all of them.

31.♔d2 ♘g4 32.♘e4 ♖g2 33.e6 fxe6 34.h5 ♔e7 35.♘xc5 ♘f6



The rest is just a matter of simple technique, because Black has a passed pawn on top of everything else. Ruslan puts up a stubborn resistance until the last bullet as usual but in vain. Evgeny proved to be stronger that day!

36.♔e3 ♖g5 37.♔d4 ♘xh5 38.♔xc4 ♘f4 39.♗f3 ♖g3 40.♗e4 ♘h5 41.a4 ♘f6 42.♗a8 ♖g4+ 43.♔b5 ♘e8 44.♔a5 ♖c4 45.b4 ♘d6 46.♔a6 ♖xb4 47.♔xa7 e5 48.♔a6 e4 49.♔a5 ♖c4 50.♔b6 e3 51.♗f3 ♖f4 52.♗h5 ♖h4 53.♗f3 ♘c4+ 54.♔b5 ♘e5 55.♗e2 ♖h2 56.♘d3 ♘xd3 57.♗xd3 e2 58.♗xe2 ♖xe2 59.a5 ♔d7 0–1

Finally White resigned a little bit too late, though... Bareev played that game superbly!

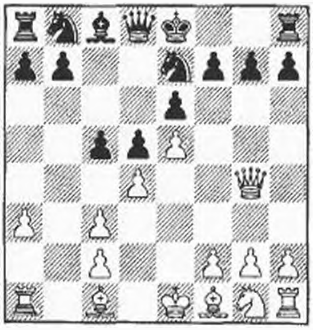
7 **C18**

Shirov – Timman

Round 1 11.01

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.e5 c5 5.a3 ♗xc3+ 6.bxc3 ♘e7 7.♕g4

This is the most energetic line for White in the Winawer variation and it rendered the formerly popular positional 7.♘f3 line almost completely obsolete. White exploits the temporary absence of the enemy's dark-squared bishop and attacks the g7-pawn.



7...0–0

During the 80ies of the past XX century the variation: 7...♕c7 8.♕xg7 ♖g8 9.♕xh7 cxd4 10.♘e2 dxc3 11.f4 with a double edged play used to be considered as the main line. Black had a good counterplay against the white king that remained in the centre as a compensation for the couple of sacrificed pawns on the kingside. Theory regarded Black's castling on the kingside as dangerous because of White's eventual attack there. Meanwhile at the end of the XX century it turned out that White's threats were far from decisive and Black could even seize the initiative with some pawn breaks in the centre.

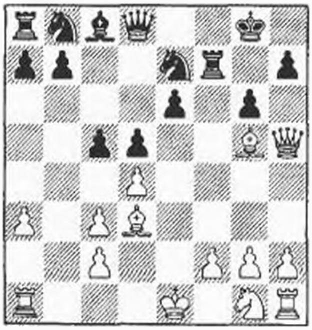
8.♗d3 f5

Black started playing lately the relatively unexplored move 8...♕a5 with the idea to tie White's dark-squared bishop to the defence of the queenside. The other quite popular line presently is – 8...♘bc6 9.♕h5 ♘g6 10.♘f3 ♕c7 11.♗e3 c4 12.♗xg6 fxg6 13.♕g4 followed by h4-h5.

9.exf6 ♖xf6 10.♗g5 ♖f7 11.♕h5

This move forces Black to weaken his king additionally.

11...g6



12.♕d1

White's queen is much better placed here than on the kingside because it cannot be attacked by Black's light pieces, so White can prepare easily h4-h5, and also because it defends the weakened queenside.

12...♘bc6 13.♘f3 ♕f8

This is just one of the possible lines for Black. He keeps the tension in the centre and prepares the move h7-h6, which is going to improve his control over the dark squares in his camp. Timman with Black against Anand in the tournament in Dortmund 1999, played first 13...c4 14.♗e2, and only then 14...♕f8, but after 15.♕c1!? (with the idea to prevent h6) 15...♘f5 (that move enables White to put his bishop on the h2-b8 diagonal, which is no doubt quite favourable for him) 16.h4 h6 17.♗f4 ♗d7 18.♘e5 ♘xe5 19.♗xe5 he failed to equalize. Black's kingside is very vulnerable while White's weaknesses are not easily accessible at all. The game followed with 19...♘e7 20.♕e3 ♘c6 21.♗g3 ♖e8 22.h5 g5 23.0–0 ♘e7 24.♗e5 ♘c6 25.♗h2 ♖g7 (25...♘e7 will be countered by White with 26.g4 Δf4) 26.♗g4 ♕f6 27.♖ae1↑ – and White prepared later f2-f4 successfully and won the game. Black has also tested in practice 13...♕a5 as well as 13...♕c7 with the idea to follow with e6-e5.

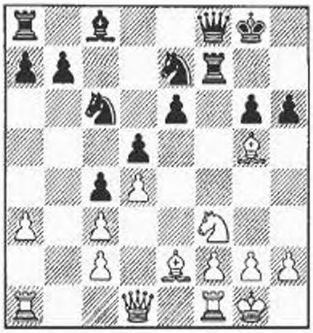
14.0–0

It was worth considering for White here to try GM Dolmatov's recommendation 14.♕d2!?, but contrary to the game Anand – Timman, Black has 14...♖xf3 (otherwise this square is defended with a white bishop on e2) 15.gxf3 ♕xf3, although after 16.♖g1 his compensation for the exchange might turn out to be insufficient.

14...c4

This is quite timely after White's castling.

15.♗e2 h6



16.♗c1

White is planning to redeploy his bishop to the traditional a3-f8 diagonal for it in the Winawer variation, moreover that the black queen is placed on f8. It was hardly reasonable to retreat that bishop to h4 – 16.♗h4 ♘f5 17.♗g3 g5 18.♕d2 ♗d7 19.h4 ♕e7 20.hxg5 ♘xg3 21.fxg3 hxg5, and later Black lost his g5-pawn indeed, but had a sufficient compensation for it in the game Timman – Jussupow, Novgorod 1995. White can try instead 16.♗d2 ♘f5 17.♕c1, increasing the pressure along the c1-h6 diagonal, as in the game: Hachian – Rychagov, Moscow 1996.

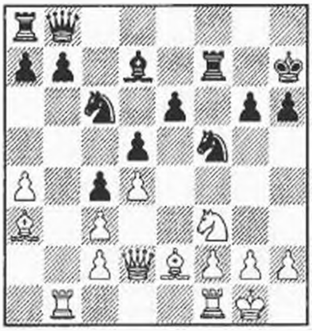
16...♔h7

In the game Ponomariov – Ivanchuk, Linares 2002, after 16...♗d7 White tried a quite original idea: 17.♘e1!? g5 18.g3 ♘f5 19.♘g2 ♕g7 20.f4 ♘d6 21.♕e1 b5 22.fxg5 ♖xf1+ 23.♗xf1 hxg5 24.♘e3 ♖f8 25.♗g2⩲, and later the weakness of the g5-pawn as well as of the whole complex of dark squares gave him a decisive advantage. It was quite possible that Black did not need to play the move g5 at all, since it was not forced and only created additional weaknesses.

17.a4 ♗d7 18.♗a3 ♕b8

Black prevents the transfer of the white bishop to the h2-b8 diagonal, which is even more attractive for it than the a3-f8 diagonal.

19.♕d2 ♘f5 20.♖ab1



20...b6

It is weaker for Black to play 20...♕c7 21.♗c1!, and he will have to weaken the position of his king considerably, because of the absence of the move ♕f8: 21...g5 22.h4 g4 23.♘h2 h5 24.♕g5 ♘g7 25.♖e1 ♖h8 26.♘f1↑ and White had a clear advantage, Bacrot – Pelletier, Biel 2003.

21.a5

Now White manages to get rid of the weak a4-pawn, but he is forced to retreat his bishop back to c1. He could have played instead some other useful waiting move, for example 21.h3 (in order to be able to manoeuvre later his knight to g4 via h2).

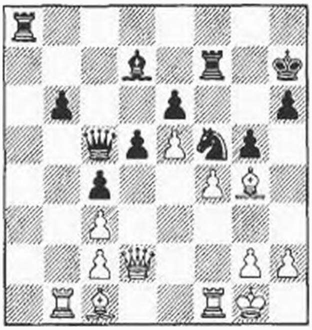
21...♕d8 22.axb6 axb6 23.♗c1 g5 24.♘e5

This is possibly too straightforward. It was again worth considering 24.h3!? with the idea to follow with ♘h2 and f2-f4.

24...♘xe5 25.dxe5 ♕c7 26.♗h5 ♖g7 27.♗g4 ♖f7

27...♕xe5 28.♖xb6 would have enabled White to activate his pieces too much.

28.f4 ♕c5+



29.♕f2

Black manages to neutralize White's threats along the f-file easily in the endgame and to preserve the equality. It was worth for White to retreat with the king – 29.♔h1, although his pieces were temporarily misplaced and he was not even threatening to capture on g5 because of ♘g3+.

29...gxf4 30.♗xf4 ♕xf2+ 31.♖xf2 b5 32.♗e3

This is played with the idea to deploy once again the bishop along the a3-f8 diagonal and to try to occupy the f-file.

32...♔g6 33.♗c5 h5 34.♗f3 ♖c8

The idea of this move will become clear after Black's move 36.

35.♗b4 ♗c6 36.h3 ♖cc7

Black has defended his rook on f7 and he has neutralized the eventual problems along the f-file. If White plays g2-g4 Black simply exchanges on g4 and then retreats with the knight. The trade of the rooks is unavoidable next with a complete equality.

37.♔h2 ♘h4 38.♖bf1 ½ – ½

The opponents agreed to a draw, because of the numerous exchanges along the f-file that were leading to a drawish opposite-coloured bishops endgame.

8 **E97**

Bareev – Radjabov

Round 2 12.01

Notes by S. Shipov

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 ♗g7

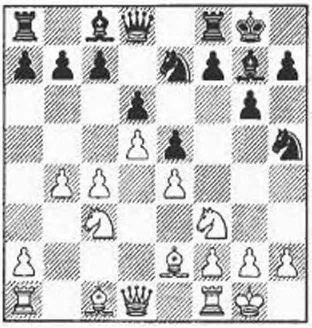
Teimour remained one of the few that continue to play the King's Indian on the top–level. This once super popular opening is in trouble nowadays.

4.e4 d6 5.♗e2 0–0 6.♘f3 e5 7.0–0

♘c6 8.d5 ♘e7 9.b4!

This line is quite ancient and was analysed mostly by the players of the now extinct Soviet Union during the 50ies of the last century. The young GM Taimanov used to play it in some international tournaments then. Sounds like yesterday, don't you think...?

9...♘h5



10.♖e1!

This idea, to prepare the retreat of the bishop to f1, brought new life to the variation in the middle of the 90ties of the last century. Its strongest exponents were Karpov and Kramnik. Black's knight on f4 turns out to be not as powerful as it seems. It is hardly believable but that is one of the main reasons of the drastic fall of popularity of the King's Indian Defence in the contemporary opening theory! Plenty of strong players as well as Garry Kasparov himself are trying to find playable lines and counterplay in some other variations. Back then everybody played 10.g3 f5 11.♘g5 ♘f6 12.f3 and Black had some serious counterplay due to the weakened white king.

10...f5

Or 10...♘f4 11.♗f1! and White's position is very solid.

11.♘g5 ♘f6

Should Black play 11...♘f4, White can respond with 12.♗xf4! exf4 13.♖c1 and later the invasion of the white knight to e6 forces the opening of the centre.

12.f3!?

The opening fashion is so variable just like a frivolous lady. 12.♗f3 used to be modern until recently, but now everybody plays the good old move f2–f3, which helps White keep a pawn on e4 and so the prospects of the black knight on e7 are very bleak.

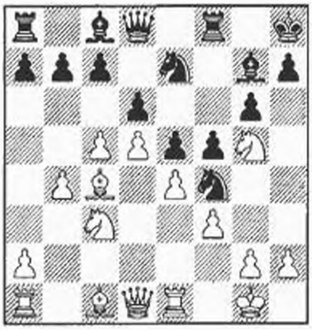
12...♘h5

This knight is headed to f4 once again. There was a game which was definitely familiar to both players (one of them participated in it!): Bareev – Topalov, Dortmund 2002 and it continued 12...c6 13.♔h1 h6 14.♘e6 ♗xe6 15.dxe6 ♘e8 16.♕b3 ♘c7 17.c5 d5 18.exd5 cxd5 19.♗b2 ♕e8 20.♖ad1 ♖d8 21.a4 a6 22.b5 and White had the initiative.

13.c5 ♘f4 14.♗c4

White's bishop avoided being exchanged but without retreating to f1 as usual. Its placement now on c4 is much more active because it controls the e6–square.

14...♔h8



15.♖b1N

This is a novelty and the game proves that move to be very strong indeed! White used to play before the straightforward 15.♘e6 ♗xe6 16.dxe6 fxe4 17.fxe4 ♘c6! 18.♗e3 ♘d4 19.♖c1 dxc5 20.bxc5 ♘fxe6 21.c6 bxc6 22.♗xe6 ♘xe6 23.♕xd8 ♖fxd8 24.♘a4 ♘d4 and White was even worse in the game Tukmakov – Efimenko, Lausanne 2001; or 15.g3 h6! 16.♘e6 ♘xe6 17.dxe6 (This is the same with the inclusion of the moves g2–g3 and h7–h6 and it is not very easy to tell who profits from that indeed..) 17...♘c6 18.cxd6 cxd6 19.♘b5 ♗xe6 20.♗xe6 ♕b6+ 21.♗e3 ♕xb5 22.exf5 gxf5 23.a4 ♕xb4 24.♖b1 ♕a3 25.♖xb7 ♘d8 26.♗c1 ♕c5+ 27.♗e3 ♕a3 28.♗c1 ♕c5+ 29.♗e3 ♕a3 and the opponents agreed to a draw in this super complicated position, Najer – Voitsekhovsky, St.Petersburg 2002.

15...a6

The direct strike 15...♘exd5, obviously does not work due to 16.♘xd5 ♕xg5 17.♗xf4 exf4 18.♘xc7 fxe4 (otherwise White captures on d6 with an advantage) 19.♘xa8 (19.♖xe4 is not so clear after 19...♗f5! 20.♕d5 ♖ad8) 19...♗h3 20.♗f1 ♖xa8 21.cxd6 e3 22.♖c1 – and White has the extra exchange and a passed d6 pawn. All that seems to be much more important than Black's e3–pawn.

The most principled line for Black 15...h6 16.♘e6 ♗xe6 17.dxe6 fxe4 18.fxe4 ♘c6 enables us to see the idea of insidious Bareev: after 19.cxd6 cxd6 20.♘b5 Black cannot capture the dangerous white pawn with the exchange combination 20...♘xe6? 21.♗xe6 ♕b6+ 22.♗e3 ♕xb5 23.a4! – and the pawn on b4 is protected so Black loses a piece – 23...♕a6 24.b5 etc.

Maybe it is worth for Black to try the familiar idea 15...a5!?. We will have to wait for a while to see the next game of somebody really enlightened...

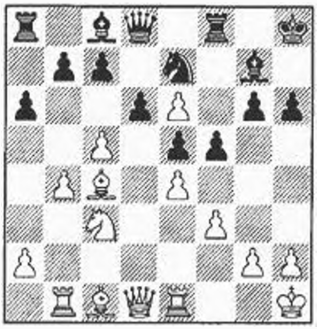
16.♔h1

This is useful prophylactics.

16...h6 17.♘e6 ♘xe6

After 17...♗xe6 18.dxe6 fxe4 19.fxe4 ♘c6 White follows with the powerful 20.♘d5 ♘xe6 21.♕g4 with the idea 21...♕e8?! 22.cxd6 cxd6 23.♘b6!

18.dxe6



This change of the pawn structure is quite typical for this line. The fight now will be focused in the centre. Black should not even think about attacks on the side. White might need to pay a certain price for that – the e6 pawn. It is like a spy behind enemy lines, a kind of undercover James Bond in disguise!

18...♘c6

White can now capture on e4 with the rook in answer to 18...fxe4, because d6–d5 is not working anymore.

19.b5!

Evgeny is making use of the rook on b1 too.

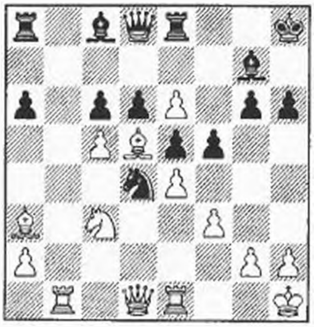
19...♘d4

Black's position is in ruins after 19...axb5 20.♘xb5 dxc5 21.♕xd8 ♖xd8 22.♘xc7+−

20.bxa6 bxa6 21.♗a3

White succeeds to create threats permanently and so the infiltrator on e6 remains still alive.

21...♖e8 22.♗d5 c6



23.cxd6!

"The name is Bond – James Bond" must be saved at all costs and the bishop is quite expendable!

23...♗xe6!

Oh, no! Black is not happy to capture a bishop instead of the "one and only" pawn. He wins a piece after 23...cxd5 24.e7 ♕d7 25.♘xd5 but it is immaterial and Black will be totally doomed!

24.♗xe6 ♖xe6

Bond is not dead, not yet. He simply changed station from e6 to d6!

25.♗c5

White puts the knight on d4 under pressure in order to parry the threat ♗g7-f8.

25...♘b5

Black is not out of the woods after 25...♗f8 26.♗xd4 exd4 27.♕xd4+ ♗g7 28.e5! Black's most stubborn defence probably is 25...♕d7.

26.♕b3 ♕e8 27.♖ed1

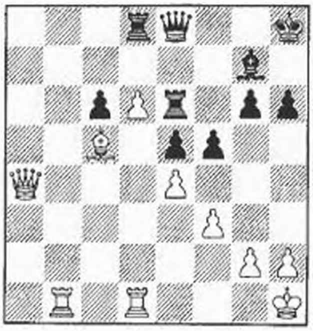
The tension around the super important d6–pawn mounts...

27...♖d8 28.♘xb5! axb5 29.a4!

It is vital for White to penetrate quickly from the side.

29...bxa4 30.♕xa4

White is threatening to establish his rook to b6 and Black is defenceless!



30...♗f8?

This blunder is not changing anything. In case of 30...♕d7 31.♖b6 ♖c8 32.♕b3! White easily eliminates the blockade in front of the all–powerful passed pawn with his rook from b7.

31.d7!

This final blow is dealt by the superman who was so effective behind enemy lines!

31...♕f7 32.♕a5 1–0

After 32...♗e7 White wins with 33.♗b6 so Radjabov resigned.

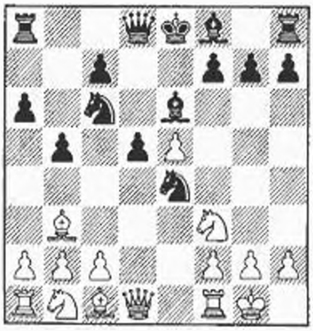
Where did Black make a mistake? I am not sure I can tell you! There were no evident mistakes. The opening line is rather difficult for Black and he must have made things more complicated with a couple of imprecise moves here and there. You play Bareev and that is enough...!

9 **C83**

Ivanchuk – Krasenkow

Round 2 12.01

1.c4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗a4 ♘f6 5.0–0 ♘xe4 6.d4 b5 7.♗b3 d5 8.dxe5 ♗e6



This is the key starting position of the Open variation of the Ruy Lopez. Black has no problems with space and develops his pieces effortlessly. White has good prospects on the kingside as well as in the centre, because the pawn on e5 is very powerful and the c3 and d4 squares are quite useful for him.

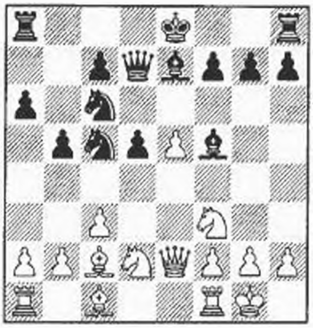
9.♘bd2 ♗e7 10.c3 ♕d7

This order of moves is quite rare. Black's main line here is 10...0–0.

11.♕e2

White usually develops his queen to e2 earlier in the Open variation – on move 9. He follows that habitually with ♖d1 and ♘c3 in order to create some pressure against the d5-pawn. White tries to repel the black knight away from e4 with the help of the rook in most of the variations, since the white queen is more useful on d1. It attacks the d4 and d5-squares and the rook is better placed on e1 defending the e5-pawn. 11.♖e1 ♘c5 12.♗c2 transposes to the main lines.

11...♘c5 12.♗c2 ♗f5



13.♘b3

If White had his rook on e1 and his queen on d1 as usual in similar positions he could have obtained some advantage after 13.♗xf5 ♕xf5 14.♘b3, winning a tempo for the manoeuvre ♘f3-d4, because of the attack against the d5-pawn (Svidler played like that against Anand in the tournament in Wijk aan Zee in 2004). White had to play in the same fashion in the game too, because he obtained no advantage whatsoever the way he played.

13...♗xc2 14.♕xc2

White can hardly achieve any edge in the opening after having lost tempi with his queen.

14...♘e6 15.♗e3 0–0 16.♖ad1

White is trying to exploit Black's only potential weakness – the d5-pawn.

16...f6

This pawn break is just thematic.

17.exf6 ♖xf6 18.♕d3 ♖d8 19.♖fe1

This is the beginning of a maneuvering fight. White can try to occupy the weak c5-square, or exploit his dominance along the e-file, or force the opponent to exchange on d4 and then make use of his weak queenside. On the other hand Black has presently defended everything successfully and he can try to get some counterchances on the kingside, because he has the semi-open f-file at his disposal and the eventual possibility of playing ♘f4. The adversaries are improving the placement of their pieces during the next several moves.

19...h6

Black is preventing the possible moves ♘g5 or ♗g5 at some moment.

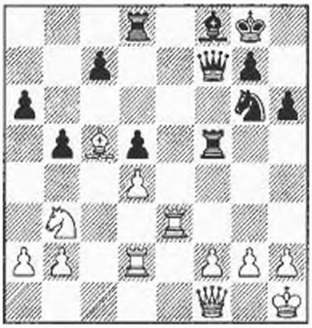
20.♔h1 ♗f8 21.♗d4 ♘f4 22.♕f1 ♖f7 23.♗e3 ♘g6

Black allows an enemy piece to occupy the c5-square. He could have also played 23...♘e6 24.♘fd4 ♘cxd4 25.cxd4 ♗d6 with an approximately equal position.

24.♗c5 ♖f6 25.♖e3 ♕f7 26.♖d2 ♖f5 27.♘fd4

In case of 27.♗xf8 ♖xf8 it is not clear how White can defend the f2-square in order to free the knight on f3. Therefore he decided to place his knight on d4 immediately.

27...♘xd4 28.cxd4



White could have obtained a slight advantage by exchanging on f8, followed by f2-f3 and ♘c5, but...

28...♗d6!

This is a typical positional resource. Black complies with the worsening of his pawn structure but deprives White of valuable outposts in the centre (c5 and e5). The doubling of the black pawns is not so important, because these pawns are easily defendable and White cannot exploit his pawn majority on the kingside because of the active black pieces.

29.♗xd6 cxd6 30.♘c1

White is trying to find some job for his knight.

30...b4 31.f3 ♕c7 32.♖e1 a5 33.♘e2 ♖f7 34.♖c1 ♕b7 35.♕f2 ♖e8 36.♘g1 ½ – ½

A draw was agreed to, since White can hardly improve his position and it might be very risky for him to push his kingside pawns.

10 D20

Karpov – Shirov

Round 2 12.01

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e4 ♘f6 4.e5 ♘d5 5.♗xc4 ♘b6 6.♗d3

White's other possibility – 6.♗b3, has also been tested numerous times in the practice of A.Karpov in the past. He started retreating to d3 unexceptionally after his match against Nigel Short.

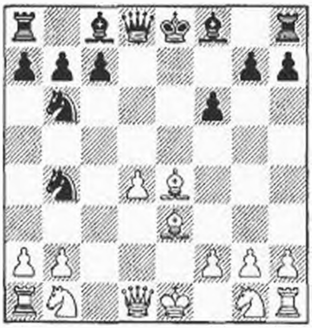
6...♘c6 7.♗e3 ♘b4

It is much harder for Black to get a satisfactory position after 7...♗e6 8.♘c3 ♕d7 9.♘f3.

8.♗e4 f5!

There is an important nuance concerning Black's move 7. If White now wishes to preserve his bishop from being exchanged he has to comply with the isolation of the d4-pawn, because the move 9.♗f3? is evidently unacceptable for him because of 9...f4! 10.♗xf4 ♗f5→. The resource for Black 8...f5! is the main reason that the whole line with the retreat of the white bishop to d3 lost its adherents lately.

9.exf6 exf6



10.♘c3

The opponents in this game had a theoretical battle in the same variation once before. After 10.a3 Shirov tried an interesting novelty 10...♘4d5!? instead of the routine 10...f5. After the almost forced line: 11.♕h5+ g6 12.♗xg6+ hxg6 13.♕xh8 ♕e7 14.♘e2 ♗f5 15.♘bc3 0–0–0=∞ Black had a good compensation for the sacrificed material in the game Karpov – Shirov, Prague (m/1) 2002.

10...f5 11.♗f3

The other retreat of the bishop has also been tested – 11.♗b1, but after 11...♘4d5 12.♘f3 ♗d6 13.♗g5 ♕d7 14.♕e2+ ♕e6 15.♘e5 0–0= White did not get any advantage in the game Timman – Salov, Sanghi Nagar (m/4) 1994.

11...♘4d5 12.♗d2

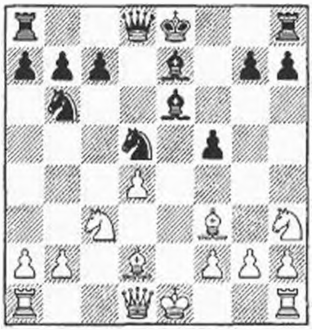
It is understandable that White wishes to avoid the exchange of the bishop for the knight. After 12.♘ge2 ♘xe3 (12...♗e6 13.♘f4 ♘xf4 14.♗xf4± Ostenstad – Madsen, Vettre 1993) 13.fxe3 ♗d6∞ (N.Short) Black's prospects are definitely not worse.

12...♗e6 13.♘h3!?

The game Karpov – Short, Linares (m/3) 1992, followed with 13.♘ge2 ♕d7 14.0–0 0–0–0 15.♖e1 ♖g8 16.♗g5 ♖e8 17.♘f4 ♘xf4 18.♗xf4 g5 19.♗e5 ♗g7∞ and the position was very complicated.

13...♗e7

Alexey Shirov is the first to deviate from the trodden path. He played once before 13...♕d7 with the idea to shelter his king on the queenside. After 14.0–0 0–0–0 15.♖e1 ♘xc3!? 16.bxc3 (16.♗xc3 ♗d6 17.♘g5 ♗d5=) 16...♗a3! 17.♘f4 ♗c4 18.♕c2 ♖he8 19.♘d3 ♕a4! 20.♕xa4 ♘xa4 21.♘e5 ♗d5 22.♗xd5 ♖xd5 23.♘c4 ♖xe1+ 24.♖xe1 ♗b2! 25.♘xb2 ♘xb2= in the game Dreev – Shirov, Moscow (active) 2002, played in the “Russia – Rest of the world” match, Black managed to equalize, but most probably White's play could have been improved somewhere.



14.0–0

Karpov pointed out another possibility in his comments – the move 14.♕e2.

14...0–0 15.♖e1 ♗f7 16.♘xd5

Anatoly Evgenievich decided not to play 16.♘f4 because of the line 16...♘xf4 (it is weaker for Black to play 16...c6?! because after 17.♘cxd5 ♘xd5 18.♘xd5 ♗xd5 19.♗xd5+ cxd5 20.♕b3± White exerts strong pressure against the d5-pawn and that combined with the chronic weakness on the e5-square might spell trouble for Black) 17.♗xf4 c6=.

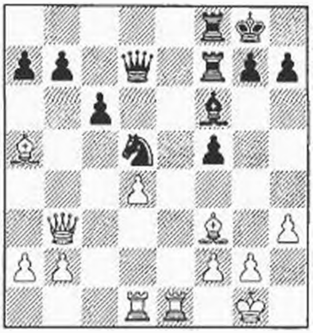
16...♘xd5 17.♕c2 ♕d7 18.♘g5!

Shirov must part with one of his bishops now.

18...♗f6!?

Black's dark-squared bishop is busy defending the all-important e5-square and that makes it more valuable than its colleague. After 18...♗xg5 19.♗xg5± White has a slight but stable advantage.

19.♘xf7 ♖xf7 20.♕b3 c6 21.♖ad1 ♖d8 22.♗a5 ♖df8 23.h3



23...♔h8?!

This move is quite natural and Shirov's wish to get rid of the pin of the knight is evident and understandable. The ex-world champion considers that move to be the main reason for Black's problems later in this game. Although Karpov does not offer any alternative we can safely assume that he had in mind 23...♖e7!? in order to reduce White's pressure along the open e-file. After 24.♖xe7 (it is less precise for White to play 24.♗xd5+, because Black can afford to trade queens then, since the b7-pawn is protected by the rook on e7 – 24...♕xd5!? 25.♕xd5+ cxd5=) 24...♗xe7 both lines: 25.♗xd5+ cxd5= (it is also possible for Black to play 25...♕xd5, although after 26.♕xb7 ♕xa5 27.♕xe7 ♕xa2 28.♕b7± White's pieces are a bit more active), as well as: 25.♗d2 ♗f6 26.♗f4 (in case of 26.♗xd5+ ♕xd5 27.♕xb7 ♕xd4 28.♕xc6 ♗g5∞ the white pieces are unpleasantly pinned along the d-file) 26...♖e8= are promising Black to gradually equalize after a careful play.

24.♗d2!

White attempts to place his bishop on f4 in order to fight for the e5-square.

24...♖d8

The tactical argument behind White's last move is that Black cannot play 24...♗xd4? due to 25.♗xd5 cxd5 26.♗b4+–. Note that the idea to trade rooks with 24...♖e7 is not hundred percent satisfactory for Black because of 25.♖xe7 ♗xe7 26.♗xd5 cxd5 27.♗f4±.

25.♗xd5 ♕xd5 26.♕xd5 cxd5 27.♗f4 g6 28.♗e5 ♗xe5 29.♖xe5±

The position has been simplified a lot, but White still has some winning chances in the four rooks' endgame. The reason of course is the weakness of the e5-square.

29...♖c7 30.♖d2 ♔g7 31.g4 ♔f6 32.♔g2 ♖c4 33.f4 ♖d7 34.♔g3 a5 35.♔h4 a4

The time-control was coming nearer and both sides started playing not quite precisely. Black had better play here 35...♖c1!?.

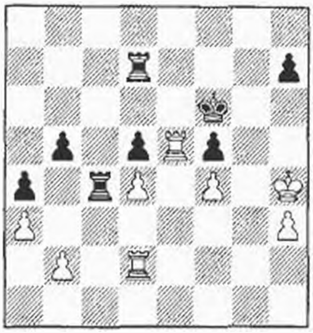
36.a3

It was better for White to try 36.gxf5 gxf5 37.♖e8±.

36...b5?!

That was a substantial imprecision that could have caused a lot of trouble for Black. The correct move was 36...♖c1!? with the idea to counter 37.gxf5 with 37...♖f1!. After 38.fxg6 (in case of 38.♔g3 gxf5= the white king will not be able to penetrate and attack the f5-pawn) 38...♖xf4+ 39.♔g3 ♖xd4 40.♖xd4 ♔xe5 41.gxh7 ♖xh7 42.♖xa4 d4∞ and Black has a powerful passed d-pawn supported by the king and does not risk losing at all.

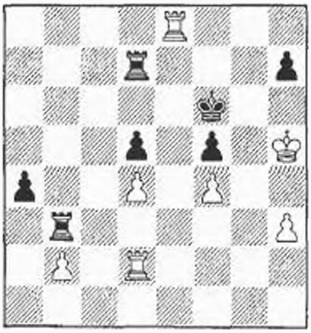
37.gxf5 gxf5



38.♔h5?!

Karpov pointed out that Black would have difficult problems to solve after the correct move 38.♖e8!. It is not easy then to find a convincing path for Black to the draw. For example after 38...b4 (just like in the game) White can play 39.axb4 (it is not good for White to transpose the moves, because after 39.♖f8+ ♖f7 40.♖xf7+ ♔xf7 41.axb4 Black saves the game with 41...♔f6! 42.b5 ♖b4=, and after 41.♔g5 White has to worry about 41...b3!⇄ and the penetration of the black rook to c2 would be rather dangerous for White) 39.axb4 39...♖xb4 40.♖f8+ ♖f7 41.♖xf7+ (it is not so good for White to play 41.♖d8 because of 41...♖e7 42.♖xd5 ♖e4=) 41...♔xf7 42.♔g5 ♔e6 43.h4↑ and Black is on the verge of losing because of the active white pieces.

38...b4 39.axb4 ♖xb4 40.♖e8 ♖b3



41.♖f8+

It became clear now that White just lost time unnecessarily with the move 38.♔h5. It was also useless to come back with the king 41.♔h4?! because of 41...♖f3!.

41...♖f7 42.♖xf7+ ♔xf7 43.♔g5 ♖xh3 44.♔xf5 ♖h5+ 45.♔g4 ♖h1 46.♔f5 ♖h5+ 47.♔g4 ♖h1 48.♖c2 ♖d1 49.♖c7+ ♔g8 50.♖c8+ ½ – ½

11 **E46**

Ponomariov – Kramnik

Round 2 12.01

Notes by M. Notkin

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.e3 0–0 5.♘ge2

By this move White shows his wish to keep the pawn structure intact. Saving a tempo on the light-squared bishop's development, he doesn't allow his opponent to play c7-c5 as it will be met by a2-a3.

5...d5 6.a3 ♗e7 7.cxd5 ♘xd5

7...exd5 is of equal value.

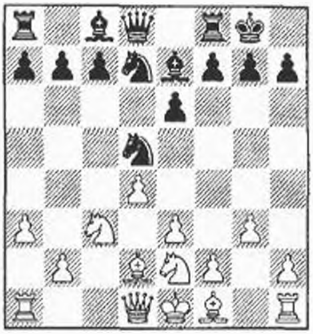
8.♗d2

A ploy which you can meet also in the Petrosian System of the Queens Indian. White puts the bishop on d2 in anticipation of the exchange on c3 in order to take its place on the long diagonal.

8...♘d7

8...♘f6 9.g3 ♘bd7 10.♗g2 c6 11.♕c2 e5 12.♖d1 exd4 13.♘xd4 ♘b6 14.h3 ♘fd5 15.0–0 gave White a stable advantage in Graf – Xu Jun, Bled 2002. After 8...♘xc3 9.♘xc3 (9.♗xc3 b6) 9...c5 10.dxc5 ♗xc5 11.♘e4 ♗e7 12.♗c3 White is slightly better, Taimanov – Karpov, Leningrad 1973.

9.g3



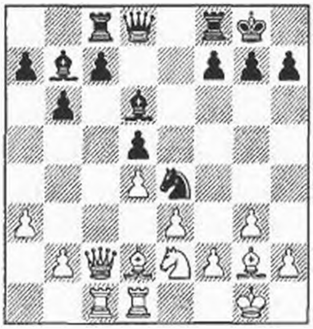
9...b6

A new move. 9...♘xc3 10.♗xc3 c5 was played in Volkov – Sakaev, New Delhi 2000. After 11.♗g2 cxd4 12.♕xd4 ♗f6 13.♕d6 ♘b6 14.♕xd8 ♗c3 15.♘xc3 ♖xd8 Black managed to equalize.

10.♘xd5 exd5 11.♗g2 ♘f6 12.0–0 ♘e4 13.♖c1

Ponomariov accepts the exchange of the dark-squared bishop. In this case it would be difficult for Black to prepare c7-c5 in view of the d5 pawn weakness.

13...♗b7 14.♕c2 ♖c8 15.♖fd1 ♗d6



Kramnik isn't in a hurry to play c7-c5, apparently considering the arising positions as favourable for White. Ponomariov tries to provoke this advance.

16.♗b4!

An interesting move. White is going to swap his opponent's good bishop. The exchange on b4 would open the a-file for White and Black would have to forget about playing c5 for a long time.

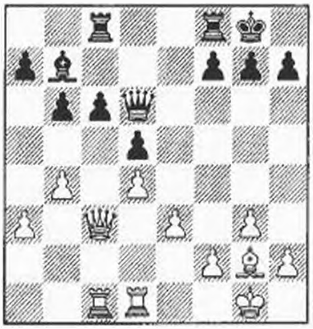
16...♕f6

This was the last moment when Black could play 16...c5. When this move is made 20 moves later it leads to an immediate loss. Here White would have replied 17.dxc5 bxc5 and now there's no need to complicate by 18.♗xe4 cxb4! (18...dxe4 19.♗xc5! ♖xc5 20.♕xc5 ♗xc5 21.♖xd8 ♖xd8 22.♖xc5 and 22...♖d2 is parried by 23.♖b5) 19.♗xh7+ ♔h8 20.♕f5 ♖xc1 21.♖xc1 g6 22.♗xg6 fxg6 23.♕xg6 ♕f6. Ponomariov would have played simply 18.♗e1 followed by ♘c3 with a slight edge to White.

17.♘c3

Avoiding a "mini-trap" 17.♗xd6? ♕xf2+.

17...♘xc3 18.♕xc3 c6 19.♗xd6 ♕xd6 20.b4



White has a lasting advantage on the queenside. Kramnik now begins to seek a place for the bishop.

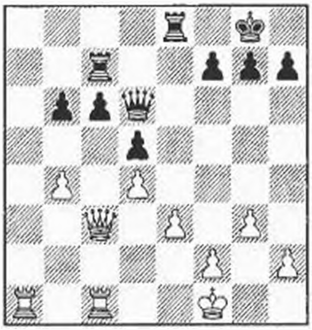
20...♖c7 21.a4 ♖fc8 22.a5

Black can't take on a5 as it would weaken the c5 square irremediably. That means White is able to choose the moment when the a-file will be opened. Perhaps it was more accurate to make this move after 22.♗f1!? which wouldn't allow Black to activate his bishop.

22...♗a6! 23.♖a1 ♗b5

23...♗c4 24.axb6 axb6 25.e4±.

24.♖dc1 ♖e8 25.axb6 axb6 26.♗f1 ♗xf1 27.♔xf1



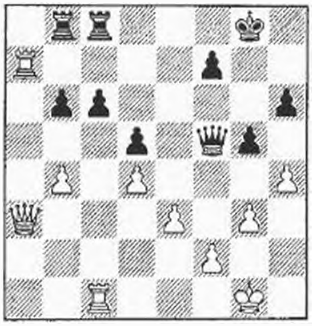
The weakness of queenside pawns forces Black's rooks to take defensive places. Only the queen can display activity.

27...♖b8 28.♖a6 ♕d7 29.♔g1 h6 30.♕a3 ♖cc8!

Preventing the exchange of a pair of rooks. It's better for Black to have two rooks to protect the pawns.

31.h4 ♕f5 32.♖a7 g5

This move weakens Black's king shield but Vladimir is searching for counterplay. If White takes on g5 then after ...♔g7 threats along the h-file could be created. But Ruslan finds an excellent reply. I think after the discreet 32...♕e6 33.♕a6 ♕d6 the game would have ended up in a draw.



33.h5! ♕f3

The h5 pawn should have been taken another way – 33...g4! 34.♕a6 ♕xh5 35.b5 (if the white rook leaves the a-file Black sends his rook to the his opponent's 2nd rank with sufficient counterplay e.g. 35.♖b7 ♖a8! 36.♕xb6 ♖a2 37.♖f1 ♕f5) 35...c5 36.dxc5 bxc5 (in case of 36...♖xc5? 37.♖xc5 bxc5 38.♖a8 White's passed pawn is extremely dangerous) 37.♖b7 c4 with mutual chances since the black pawn is as close to promotion as the white one.

34.♕d3!

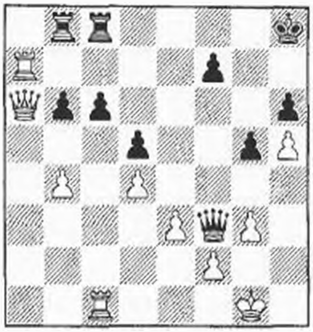
This idea was unexpected for Kramnik and he loses his way.

34...♔h8?!

If 34...♕xh5 then 35.♕f5! ♕g6 (the queen's only move) 36.♕xg6+ fxg6 37.♖d7± and Black has too many weak pawns along the 6th rank. But maybe he could create a fortress by 34...♕g4 and if 35.♕a6 ♕e6 36.♖b7 then 36...♖xb7 37.♕xb7 b5.

35.♕a6

In the event of 35.♖d7 Black defends by 35...♖a8! (too passive is 35...♕f6 36.g4) 36.♖d6 ♔g7 (36...♕xh5? 37.♔g2 followed by ♖h1 winning) 37.♕c2 ♖a3! 38.♖xc6 ♖xc6 39.♕xc6 ♖xe3 40.fxe3 ♕xg3+ with a perpetual check.



35...♔g7?

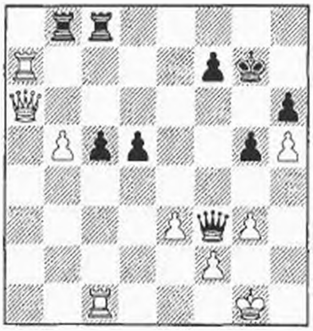
More stubborn was 35...♕xh5 36.♖b7! ♖a8 37.♕xb6 ♔g7 38.♖c7 ♖xc7 39.♕xc7 ♖a6 40.♕e5+! (40.♖xc6 leads to a draw after 40...♕d1+ 41.♔g2 ♖a1 42.♕e5+ ♔h7 43.♕f5+ ♔g8! 44.♖c8+ ♔g7 45.♕e5+ ♔g6 46.♖g8+ ♔h5 47.g4+ ♔xg4?? 48.♕f4+! ♔h5 49.♕h2+! ♔g4 50.♕h3#; 47...♕xg4+ 48.♕g3=) 40...♔h7 41.b5! cxb5 42.♕xd5±.

36.b5! c5?

Black is already in serious troubles but this move loses on the spot. The game could have been prolonged by 36...♕f6 37.bxc6 ♖xc6 38.♖xf7+! ♔xf7 (38...♕xf7 39.♖xc6+−) 39.♕a7+ ♕e7 40.♕xe7+ ♔xe7 41.♖xc6 b5 42.♖xh6 b4 43.♖c6 b3 44.♖c1 g4 45.♖b1+− and the white king marches towards the queenside.

37.dxc5 bxc5

Simply overlooking White's next move. Anyway the desperate attack 37...d4 38.exd4 (38.♕a1!? bxc5 39.♖xc5!) 38...♖e8 39.c6 ♖c2 40.♖f1 ♖be8 41.♕a3! wouldn't change anything, e.g. 41...♖8e3 42.♖xf7+!.



38.♕g6+! 1–0

38...♔h8 39.♖xf7+−; 38...♔f8 39.♕xh6+ ♔g8 40.♕xg5+ ♔h8 (40...♔f8 41.h6+−) 41.♖a6+−

12 **E15**

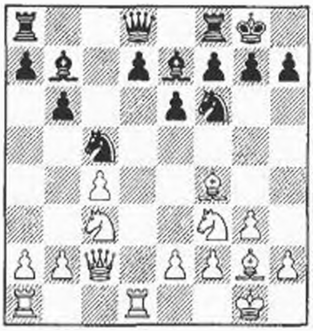
Timman – Grischuk

Round 2 12.01

1.c4 ♘f6 2.d4 e6 3.♘f3 b6 4.g3 ♗a6 5.♕a4 c5 6.dxc5

White usually plays here 6.♗g2 ♗b7 7.dxc5, but that only leads to transposition of moves.

6...♗xc5 7.♗g2 ♗b7 8.0–0 0–0 9.♘c3 ♗e7 10.♗f4 ♘a6 11.♖fd1 ♘c5 12.♕c2



12...♕c8

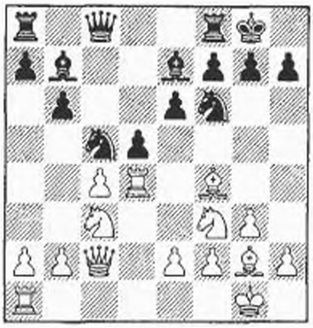
Black's position is a bit cramped and so he would not mind some simplification. The immediate move 12...♘ce4?! was refuted tactically with 13.♘e5! ♘xc3 14.♗xb7 ♘xd1 15.♖xd1 ♖b8 16.♘c6 dxc6 17.♖xd8 ♖bxd8 18.♕a4± as it was played in the game Timman – Seirawan, Amsterdam 1992. Therefore Alexander Grischuk defends the bishop on b7 preparing the move ♘c5-e4 in the process.

13.♖d4!?

White preferred to play 13.♖ac1 in general, but the tournament practice showed that after: 13...♘ce4!? 14.♘d4 ♘xc3 (Black's tactical operation starting with 14...♘xf2?, after 15.♔xf2 e5 16.♗xe5 ♘g4+ 17.♔g1 ♘xe5 18.♕f5 ♗xg2 19.♔xg2 ♕b7+ 20.♘d5± led to a difficult position for Black, because of the weak light squares in the centre in the board Salov – Sax, Skelleftea 1989.) 15.♕xc3= Black had no problems whatsoever.

13...d5

Thus Black gets rid of the backward d-pawn and intends to solve all his opening problems.



14.cxd5

It is useless for White to preserve the tension in the centre with the move 14.♖c1, because after 14...♘ce4 (it is worse for Black to play 14...♘fe4?!, because after 15.cxd5 ♘xc3 16.♕xc3 ♗xd5 17.b4± as it was played in the game Seres – Kiesekamp, Szeged 1998, Black loses material) 15.♘xe4 dxe4 16.♘e5 h6 17.♕c3 ♖d8 18.♖cd1 ♖xd4 19.♖xd4 ♕e8= Black's position was excellent in the game Khalifman – Leko, Wijk aan Zee 2002.

14...exd5

The fact that Black complied with having an isolated pawn in the centre was a definite plus for White. Black's more principled line is: 14...♘xd5!? 15.♘xd5 ♗xd5 16.♘g5 (White only forces simplification with 16.♘e1 ♗xg2, as in the game C.Horvath – Palac, Halkidiki 2002, while after 16.♖ad1 ♘e4 17.♕d3 ♕b7 18.♘d2 ♘f6 19.e4 ♗c6 20.♗d6 ♗xd6 21.♖xd6 ♖ac8 22.e5 ♗xg2 23.exf6 ♗d5 24.♕d4 gxf6 25.♕xf6 ♕c7 26.♕g5+ ♔h8 27.♕f6+ ♔g8= as it was played later in the game Van Wely – Leko, Wijk aan Zee 2004, Black also managed to solve the opening problems successfully) 16...♗xg5

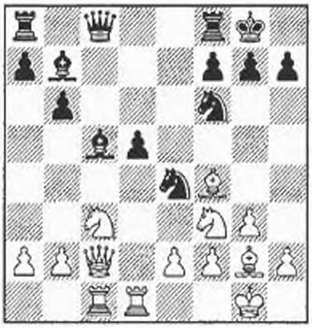
17.♗xg5 (it is important that after 17.♗xd5 exd5! 18.♗xg5 ♘e4 19.♕xc8 ♖axc8 20.♖xd5 ♘xg5 21.♖xg5 ♖c2= Black manages to preserve tactically the material balance) 17...♗xg2 18.♔xg2 ♕b7+ 19.♔g1 e5 20.♖c4 ♘e6 21.♗e3 ♖fd8= and Black equalized easily in the game A.Kuzmin – Ravi, Calcutta 2002.

15.♖dd1 ♘ce4

It is evidently weaker for Black to play 15...♘e6?!, because after 16.♗e5 ♘e4 17.♖ac1 ♗c5 18.e3 ♖d8 19.♕b3± Black had problems to defend his d5-pawn in the game Ikonnikov – Jakovenko, Samara 2000.

16.♖ac1 ♗c5

Black could have exchanged the queens with 16...♘xc3 17.♕xc3 ♕xc3 18.♖xc3, but after 18...♗c5 19.♘d4 ♖fe8 20.♖c2 ♘e4 21.♔f1± P.Nikolic – Timman, Enschede 2002, or 18...♖fc8 19.♖xc8+ ♖xc8 20.♘d4± Chuchelov – Kritz, Istanbul 2003, he must be prepared for a long and laborious defence in the endgame.



17.♘d4

White's alternative was the move 17.e3!? with the idea to bring later the dark-squared bishop to the d4-square, for example: 17...♖e8 (White is also slightly better in case of 17...♘xc3 18.♕xc3 ♘e4 19.♕d3 ♕e6 20.♗e5 ♖ac8 21.♗d4± as it was played in the game Gelfand – Leko, Cannes 2002) 18.h3 h6 19.♗e5 ♕e6 20.♘b5 ♕d7 21.♕b3 ♖ad8 22.♗d4±, as in the game Stefanova – Lobron, Wijk aan Zee 2004.

17...♖e8 18.♘xe4

Maybe here it was again better for White to play 18.e3!?, because after 18...♘xc3 19.♕xc3 ♘e4 20.♕e1 ♕d7 21.♘b3± he had some advantage in the game Almasi – Leko, Monaco 2003. The white queen on e1 is not standing in the field of action of the rest of the white pieces.

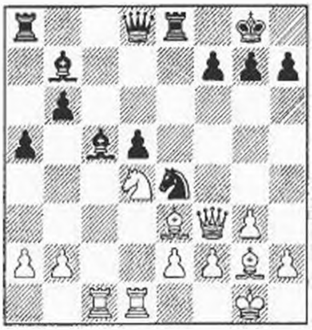
18...♘xe4

It was also possible for Black to play 18...dxe4 19.♘b5 ♖d8, because after 20.♘d6 ♗xd6 21.♖xd6 ♕xc2 22.♖xc2 ♖xd6 23.♗xd6 ♖d8 24.♗f4 ♖d1+ 25.♗f1 ♘d5 26.♖c1 ♖xc1 27.♗xc1 f5= White would hardly be able to materialize his bishop pair advantage.

19.♕d3

Black can counter 19.♕b1 with 19...a5!?.

19...♕d8 20.♕f3 a5 21.♗e3



21...♘d6!

Black prevents the possible moves of the white knight on d4, taking advantage of the slightly misplaced white queen on f3.

22.♗f4

Timman did not find a way to improve his position.

22...♘e4 23.♗e3 ♘d6 24.♗f4 ♘e4
½ – ½

13 C42

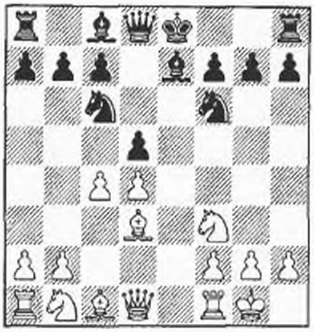
Topalov – Anand

Round 2 12.01

Notes by S. Shipov

Vesselin played well and quite creatively at that. He overestimated his chances and failed to anticipate the moment to agree to a draw...

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘f6 3.♘xe5 d6 4.♘f3 ♘xe4 5.d4 d5 6.♗d3 ♘c6 7.0–0 ♗e7 8.c4 ♘f6



9.h3

This prophylactic move became quite popular in the last several years. The point is that in answer to 9.♘c3 Black can play 9...♗e6 10.c5 ♗g4! with a good position. Sometimes all this happens after the inclusion of the moves 9...0–0 10.♖e1.

9...♘b4 10.♗e2 dxc4 11.♗xc4 0–0 12.♘c3 c6

So roaming through one of the labyrinths of the Petroff Defence the opponents reached a standard position with an isolated pawn.

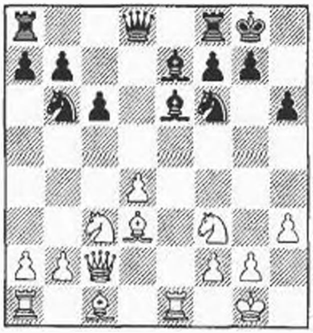
13.♖e1 ♘bd5

Black has an excellent control over the d5–outpost as usual.

14.♕b3 ♘b6 15.♗d3 ♗e6

This powerful bishop is cementing Black's position...

16.♕c2 h6



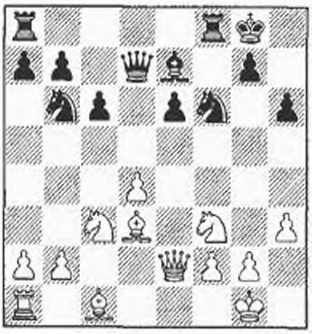
Pay attention now!

17.♖xe6!?

The great players of the past would have been shocked after a sacrifice like that. Why give away a substantial material unit? Well, almost for nothing. White has some pressure on the light squares, for a rather long time, though... By the way similar purely "philosophical" sacrifices of pawns, exchanges and even pieces are just routine for the contemporary chess. The initiative is above everything! You only have to create problems to the opponent and pressed by the lack of sufficient time he will definitely start making mistakes and succumb at the end. This sacrifice was already tried once in a similar situation by GM Bologan against GM Rozentalis in the tournament in Belfort 1998 and White won!

You all know the power of the "negative" example! Moreover a winning one...People used to play before the prudent and simple 17.a3 ♘bd5 18.♘a4 Bologan – Kasimdzhanov, Pamplona 2002. Notice that Viorel decided not to repeat himself four years later. You think he might have played bad or what? No, I don't think so. He probably understood that was what was expected from him and played something new! He won again! There were games running like 17.♗d2 ♘bd5 18.a3 ♖c8 19.♘a4 – as Gelfand – Jussupow, Istanbul 2000, as well as Lutz – Fridman, Essen 2002.

17...fxe6 18.♕e2 ♕d7



19.♗d2

White should not try to attack immediately. He should complete his development first and create threats **gradually**. He can afford doing that because the black rooks have no open files yet.

19...♗d6 20.♘e4 ♘bd5

Naturally Black is not supposed to help White penetrate to h7 with his queen.

21.♘xd6 ♕xd6 22.♖e1 ♖ad8 23.a3 ♖fe8 24.♗b1

White clarifies his intentions now. The bishop vacates the d3–square for the queen.

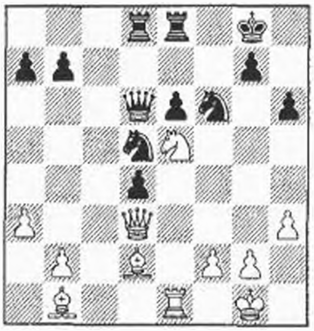
24...c5!

It is time for Black to open the game otherwise he risks losing without a fight.

25.♘e5

This is an interesting creative idea, rather risky though. White could have played the simpler 25.dxc5 ♕xc5 26.♘e5.

25...cxd4 26.♕d3



This is the point – the black pawn on d4 is the best shelter for the white queen! Black cannot dislodge the attacker because of it! White now seems free to pursue his devilish ideas!

26...♘e3!

This is a beautiful and very powerful tactical strike. Black is trying to unblock the situation in the centre.

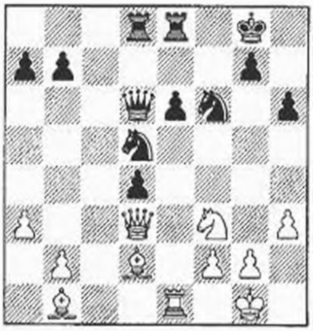
27.♘f3

Of course not 27.♗xe3 ♕xe5, while after 27.♘g6 Black can play 27...♘f5 and in case of 28.g4 the knight can come back – 28...♘e3!? – and it is again untouchable because of the deadly penetration of the black queen to g3.

27...♘ed5

This is a demonstration of peaceful intentions. Black could have played

27...♘f5, but then he would have to consider the possibility g3–g4 all the time. White has an additional resource 28.♗a2 and the placement of the knight on f5 seems to be very unstable.



28.♗xh6!

The exclamation mark is for the valour and the fighting spirit. We must note that after 28.♘e5 Black can play 28...♘e7 too and it leads to a draw by repetition once again after 29.♘g4 ♘xg4 30.hxg4 ♔f7 31.♕f3+ ♔g8 32.♕d3 ♔f7. White can try to show some more aggressive intentions at the end of this line with the tactical strike 33.♗xh6!?, and again it will all end in a draw after: 33...gxh6 34.♕h7+ ♔f8 35.♕xh6+ ♔f7. So what, a draw after all? No, not at all, White can continue the attack with 36.♖e3!! dxe3 37.♕h7+ ♔f6 38.g5+! ♔xg5 39.♕g7+ ♔h5 40.♕h7+ ♔g5 41.♕g7+ ♔h5 but now finally one has to comply with the inevitable – it is a draw after all...

28...♘f4!

Black should not be greedy – 28...gxh6 29.♕g6+ ♔f8 30.♕xh6+ ♔g8 31.♖e5!, otherwise in principle chess-greediness is quite useful...

29.♗xf4 ♕xf4

So Black managed to exchange one of the white bishops but the other remained on the board – the really dangerous one!

30.♗a2! ♖d6 31.h4

But not 31.♕g6? d3!

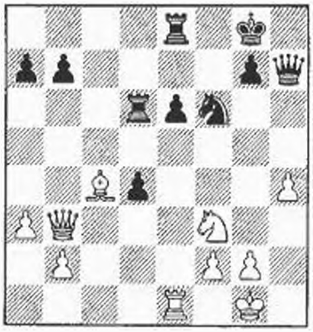
31...♕h6

Vishy covers the g6-square just in case...

32.♗c4

After 32.♘g5 ♕xh4 33.♕f5 ♕g4 34.♕e5 ♖c6 35.f3 ♕h4 36.♗xe6+ ♔f8, White's attack subsides.

32...♕h7! 33.♕b3



33...d3!

This once "harmful" for Black pawn now becomes a powerful force.

34.♖d1?

This is too passive. It is obvious that Vesselin did not have enough time to calculate variations. There was a lot to calculate in this position. The correct way for White to play was 34.♗b5 ♖ed8 (The other retreats of this rook are unsatisfactory – 34...♖b8 35.♖xe6 ♖xe6 36.♗xd3! or 34...♖e7 35.♕b4 d2 36.♘xd2) 35.♖xe6 ♖xe6 36.♕xe6+ ♔h8 37.♘e5 ♕h5 38.g4 d2 39.gxh5 d1♕+ 40.♔h2 ♕c2 41.♘f7+ ♔h7 42.♘g5+ (42.♘xd8 ♕xf2+) 42...♔h6 43.♘f7+ ♔h7 44.♘g5+ and as it is supposed to be in the "correct" variations, the game ends in a draw by a perpetual. It can be prevented by the non-trivial 34...♖b6 35.♕c4 ♖a8! 36.♖xe6 ♖xe6 37.♕xe6+ ♔h8 – and the black rook avoids the fork after ♘f3–g5–f7+. White has a good position here by the way. After 38.♕d6! he neutralizes Black's passed pawn and the chances are about equal.

34...d2!

White's rook is switched out of play now! He can not create any serious attack without this rook anymore...

35.♕b4

Or 35.♕xb7 ♕c2 36.♗b3 ♕d3–+.

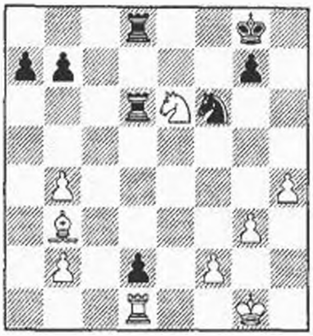
35...♖ed8 36.♘g5 ♕c2!

Black suddenly became very active.

37.♗b3 ♕c6 38.g3 ♕b6 39.♘xe6

In case of 39.♕c3 ♖c6! 40.♕f3 ♖dd6 Black can easily bring his rook to c1.

39...♕xb4 40.axb4



40...♖c8!

The discovered check is as harmless as a children's crapple. Black's extra exchange is a telling factor now. The rest of the game is a matter of simple technique.

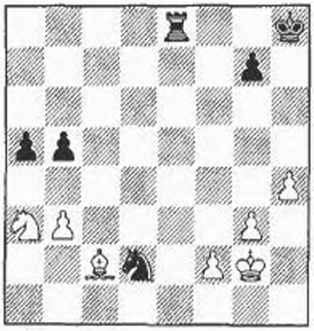
41.♔f1 ♔h8 42.♘g5 ♖d4 43.♘f7+ ♔h7 44.♘g5+ ♔h6 45.♘f7+ ♔g6 46.♘e5+ ♔h7

The black king finally avoided the bishop checks as well as the knight checks...

47.♘f3 ♖xb4 48.♘xd2 ♖d8 49.♗c2+ ♔h8 50.b3 ♖bd4 51.♔e1 b5

White's knight is pinned now and he cannot preserve the rooks on the board. He might have had considerable counterchances in an endgame with rooks...

52.♘b1 ♖e8+ 53.♔f1 ♖xd1+ 54.♗xd1 ♘e4 55.♗c2 a5 56.♘a3 ♘d2+ 57.♔g2



The white king is out of action now and it is time for Black to promote a pawn.

57...♖b8 58.g4 b4 59.♘b1 ♘xb1 60.♗xb1 ♖c8 61.♗f5 ♖c3 0–1

Black will evidently follow 62.♗e6 with 62...a4!. Topalov decided not to wait for that and resigned.

Anand proved once again to be an excellent defender – an iron man, indeed!

14 E15

Van Wely – Ju.Polgar
Round 2 12.01

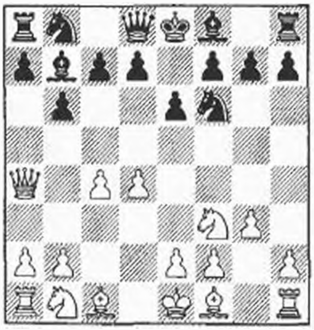
1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 b6 4.g3 ♗a6

This is a modern contemporary variation of the Queen's Indian Defence. The arising positions are usually more complex than in the lines after 4...♗b7.

5.♕a4

White's most favourite choice here is – 5.b3, after which Black should play 5...♗b4+ 6.♗d2 ♗e7, and White's position on the queenside is not so harmonious with a bishop on d2 and a pawn on b3.

5...♗b7



The loss of a tempo for the bishop moves to a6 and then to b7 is illusory, because after c7-c5 White's queen is placed best exactly on d1 and not on a4. For example after cxd4, White can capture ♕xd4 with a queen on d1, avoiding the simplifications connected with the exchange on g2. White is now forced to capture on c5 in the game and so that practically compensates amply the tempi lost by Black

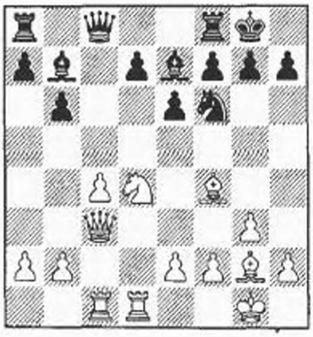
6.♗g2 c5 7.dxc5 ♗xc5 8.0–0 0–0 9.♘c3 ♗e7 10.♖d1 ♘a6 11.♗f4

This move eyes the d6-square. The other possibility – 11.♗e3 with the idea after 11...♘c5 to exchange on c5 and follow with ♘e5 next is hardly promising White much more.

11...♘c5 12.♕c2 ♕c8 13.♖ac1

White plays sometimes 13.♖d4 (taking the e4-square under control and threatening to oust the knight back to a6) and that practically forces 13...d5, but after 14.cxd5 exd5 (threatening ♘e6) 15.♖dd1 ♘ce4, Black has good chances to equalize as the game Timman – Grischuk played in the second round of the same tournament showed.

13...♘ce4 14.♘d4 ♘xc3 15.♕xc3



15...♗xg2

It was evidently more precise for Black to play 15...a6 (with the idea to follow with d7-d6) 16.♕b3 ♗xg2 17.♔xg2 ♕b7+ 18.♕f3 ♖a7!, and contrary to the game Black does not let the white knight to d6 and secondly he also wins a tempo (because of the useless move ♕b3). Black usually manages to hold the arising endgame in the encounters played in that variation.

16.♔xg2 ♕b7+ 17.♕f3 ♘e4

The endgame is rather unpleasant for Black even after the attempt to prevent the penetration of the knight to d6: 17...♕xf3+ 18.♔xf3 a6 – Black has lost several tempi in comparison to the lines in our previous comment and after 19.e4 it is not possible to defend the weaknesses on b6 and d7 satisfactorily.

18.♘b5 f5 19.♗d6 ♘xd6 20.♘xd6

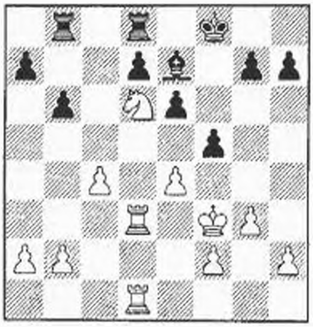
♕xf3+ 21.♔xf3

The encounter went into an endgame practically right after the opening. Black's position is worse because of the backward d7-pawn, but Black can rely to save the draw after some accurate defence although not without problems.

21...♖ab8

This is to provide the opportunity to put the rook on d8 in order to defend the d7-pawn without being afraid of the move ♘b7.

22.♖c3 ♖fd8 23.♖cd3 ♔f8 24.e4



As usual it is not enough to win the game if the opponent has only one weakness (the d7-pawn), so White is trying to do something on the kingside.

24...♗xd6 25.♖xd6 fxe4+ 26.♔xe4 ♔e7 27.f4 ♖b7 28.b3 ♖c8 29.a4

This is necessary in order to prevent Black's counterplay with b5.

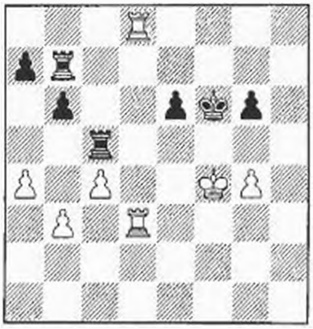
29...♖c5 30.g4 ♖bc7 31.♖1d3 h5

White could have played g5 in order to turn the h-pawn into an object for attack and accordingly into a second weakness. For example if Black exchanges a couple of rooks with – 31...♖5c6 32.♖xc6 ♖xc6, then after 33.g5 Black will have to place his rook to a passive position in order to defend the h-pawn: 33...♖c8 34.♖h3 ♖h8, and that is always very risky in rook and pawn endgames.

32.h3 ♖b7 33.f5 hxg4 34.hxg4 g6

It was worse for Black to play 34...exf5+ 35.gxf5 – because White would have excellent winning chances then with an outpost on g6 for the white rook.

35.fxe6 dxe6 36.♖d8 ♔f6 37.♔f4



37...g5+

Black was probably making a draw with 37...e5+ too (with the idea to go to g5 with the king), for example: 38.♔e4 ♔g5 39.♖g8 ♖f7. Black activates his rook. White must choose now between attacking on e5 or g6. After 40.♖d6 Black plays 40...♖f4+ 41.♔e3 (it is not purposeful for White to play 41.♔d3 ♖f3+ because the king has to go back to c2) 41...♖f6 42.♖xf6 ♔xf6 43.♔e4 ♔g5 44.♖g7 a5 45.♖d7 (in case of 45.♖e7 Black must play 45...♖c6 46.♔d5 ♖c5+, and after 47.♔d6 ♔xg4 White cannot take on e5 – 48.♖xe5 ♖xe5 49.♔xe5 ♔f3, because Black wins the king and pawn endgame.) 45...♖c6 46.♔d5 ♖c5+ 47.♔e4 (it is bad for White to play 47.♔d6 e4, and Black now has excellent winning chances) 47...♖c6= with a draw. In case of 40.♖d5

♖c6 41.♔xe5 (or 41.a5 ♔xg4 42.♖xe5 ♖f3 43.axb6 axb6 44.♖b5 ♖e6=) 41...♔xg4, White cannot make any progress on the queenside at all.

38.♔e4 ♖e5+

This is the correct defensive method. Black keeps one of the rooks to defend the queenside pawns and the other rook is used to attack the weaknesses of the enemy (in this case the g4 and also the b3-pawn). White cannot win the game despite his more active king.

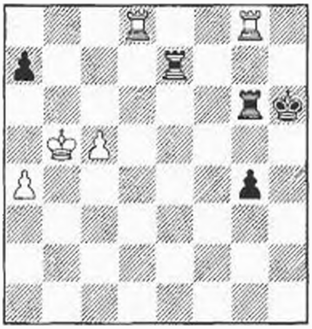
39.♔d4 ♖e1 40.♖f3+ ♔g7 41.♖ff8 ♖g1 42.♔e5

White is still not able to create a passed pawn so his only winning chance is to penetrate with his king to Black's queenside pawns. Meanwhile Black's passed g-pawn is good enough for an effective counterplay.

42...♖xg4 43.♔xe6 ♖e4+ 44.♔d5 ♖be7 45.♖g8+ ♔h6 46.♔c6 ♖4e6+!

The rook is best placed behind the passed pawn as usual, supporting its movement forward.

47.♔b5 ♖g6 48.b4 g4 49.c5 bxc5 50.bxc5



50...a6+!

The white passed pawn is stopped now along the 6th rank.

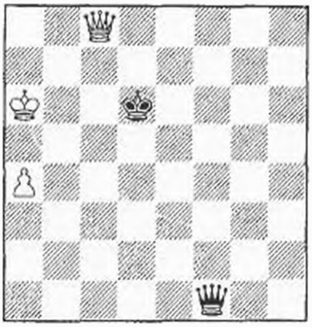
51.♔a5 ♖ee6

The immediate 51...g3? is wrong because after 52.♖xg6+ ♔xg6 53.♖d3, Black loses the pawn. Now g4-g3 becomes a threat, since Black can capture on g6 with the rook, so White forces a draw.

52.♖xg6+ ♔xg6

It is not so good for Black to play 52...♖xg6 53.♖d6 g3 54.♖xg6+ ♔xg6 55.c6 g2 56.c7 g1♕ 57.c8♕ – because after the move in the game the black king is much closer to the a-pawn and White cannot avoid the perpetual, or a drawn king and pawn endgame after the exchange of the queens.

53.♖d6 ♔f5 54.♖xe6 ♔xe6 55.c6 ♔d6 56.♔b6 g3 57.c7 g2 58.c8♕ g1♕+ 59.♔xa6 ♕f1+



Now it is an easy draw with a black king on d6, because Black can trade queens with a check if the king manages to stop the passed pawn in time as it happened in the game.

60.♔a7 ♕f2+ 61.♔a8 ♕b6 62.♕c4 ♕c6+ 63.♕xc6+ ♔xc6 ½ – ½

A draw was agreed to. Black managed to save the game with a precise defence indeed, but the opening experiment (15...♗g2) was hardly worth repeating. The move – 15...a6 provides Black with better chances to equalize.

15 **B33**

Anand – Van Wely

Round 3 14.01

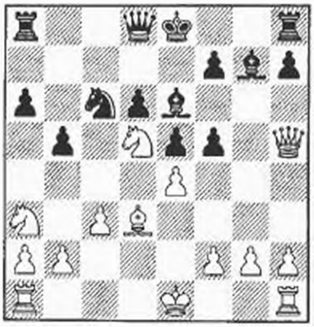
1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 e5 6.♘db5 d6 7.♗g5 a6 8.♘a3 b5 9.♗xf6 gxf6 10.♘d5 f5 11.c3 ♗g7 12.♗d3

White played 12.exf5 in the games Topalov – Grischuk, Wijk aan Zee 2003, and Anand – Leko, Dortmund 2003.

12...♗e6

Black tries sometimes here 12...♘e7 13.♘xe7 ♕xe7.

13.♕h5



13...0–0

All greatest specialists of this opening play like that: Kramnik, Leko, Topalov... If Black does not wish to allow the exchange of his dark-squared bishop for the knight on d5 he can play 13...f4 instead.

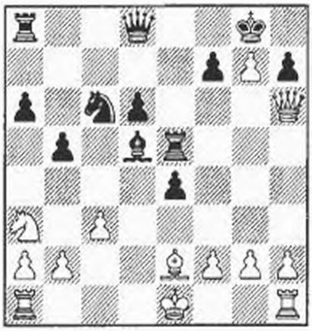
14.exf5

This game shows that Black manages to draw this position after a precise defence. It is better for White to play 14.0–0 instead and Anand does that much more often in fact.

14...♗xd5 15.f6 e4

Ivanchuk with Black surprised Anand a year ago and played 15...h6 and later he even got some edge, Anand – Ivanchuk, Linares 2002. Anand no doubt had prepared some improvement and Van Wely decided prudently not to check how strong it was.

16.fxg7 ♖e8 17.♗e2 ♖e5 18.♕h6



18...b4

This is the critical position of this line. Black has tried some other moves in this position too like: 18...♖g5; 18...♕g5 and as a rule White can hardly obtain any advantage.

19.♘c2

Capturing the pawn 19.cxb4 seems rather dubious because of 19...♘d4. The exchange of the knights is not dangerous for Black either: 19.♘c4 ♗xc4 20.♗xc4 bxc3 21.bxc3 ♕g5 22.♕xd6 ♖d8 23.♕xc6 ♖e6 24.♗xe6 (It is too risky for White to play 24.♕c7 due to 24...♕d2+ 25.♔f1 e3) 24...♕d2+ 25.♔f1 ♕d3+ and the game ended in a draw by a perpetual Naiditsch – Chuchelov, Belgium 2003.

19...bxc3 20.bxc3 ♕g5

This is a new move, but it only leads to well familiar positions. The great specialists of this line – Adorjan and Sveshnikov used to play here 20...♗e6.

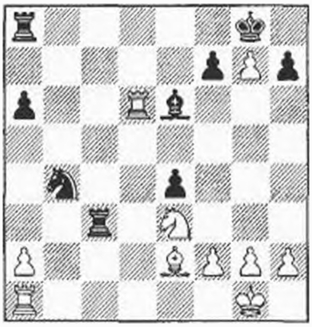
21.♕xg5 ♖xg5 22.0–0

Plenty of games reached this position after a different move order i.e. 18...♕g5 19.♕xg5 ♖xg5 20.0–0 b4 21.♘c2 bc 22.bc.

22...♗e6

Black lets his rook to the queenside in order to attack the c3-pawn.

23.♖fd1 ♖c5 24.♖xd6 ♖xc3 25.♘e3 ♘b4



26.a4

Almost 30 years ago in the game Klovans – Timoshchenko, Odessa 1975, White won a pawn with 26.a3 ♘c2 27.♘xc2 ♖xc2 28.♗xa6 ♗c4 29.♗xc4 ♖xc4 30.g3 ♖aa4 31.♖d2, but after 31...♖c3 he failed to win the game. White did not achieve much either after 26.♖d4 ♖xe3 27.fxe3 ♘c2 28.♖ad1 ♘xd4 29.♖xd4 ♗xa2= Pilgaard – Djokic, Backa Palanka 2002.

26...♘c2 27.♘xc2 ½ – ½

16 **C42**

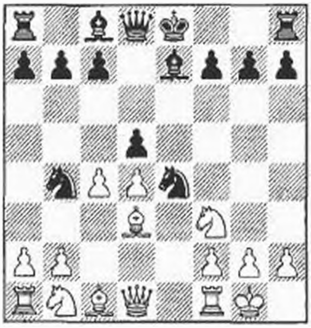
Grischuk – Karpov

Round 3 14.01

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘f6

The Petroff Defence became really popular after the introduction of the new system in the FIDE World-Championship – the knock-out. It became really necessary for Black sometimes to make a sure draw. He has no problems with his development as a rule and White's only significant advantage is his more active position in the centre.

3.♘xe5 d6 4.♘f3 ♘xe4 5.d4 d5 6.♗d3 ♘c6 7.0–0 ♗e7 8.c4 ♘b4



This is presently the main line. Black loses a tempo indeed (the knight on b4 will have to go back to c6 after White plays a2-a3), but he repels White's bishop from its active position on d3 and thus fights for the centre.

9.♗e2 0–0 10.♘c3 ♗f5

Black had a reasonable alternative here – 10...♗e6, defending the d5-pawn once again and preparing c7-c5.

11.a3 ♘xc3 12.bxc3 ♘c6 13.♖e1 ♖e8 14.♗f4

White often tries another line here with the idea to fight for an advantage – 14.cxd5 ♕xd5 and only then 15.♗f4, in order to exploit the exposed position of the black queen. Black had more problems to solve in the opening after that particular line at the beginning of the year 2003 as it happened in the games: Kasparov – Karpov, New York 2003, and Kramnik – Anand from the 8th round in Wijk aan Zee.

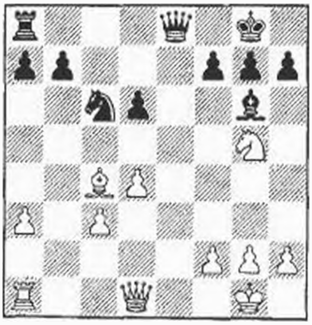
14...dxc4 15.♗xc4 ♗d6 16.♖xe8+

The other possibility 16.♗g5 ♕d7 is not very sensible for White – his bishop on g5 is not useful and White will have to simplify the position later, which is in principle favourable for the defending side.

16...♕xe8 17.♘g5

The f7-square is practically White's only target in this situation.

17...♗g6 18.♗xd6 cxd6

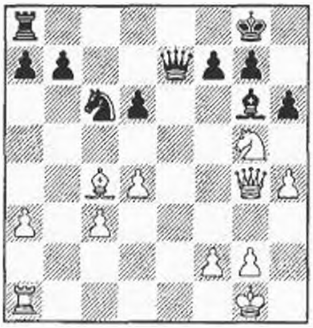


Both sides have certain weaknesses in this position. Black's pawns on d6 are f7 are vulnerable and his bishop on g6 is not well placed. White's queenside a3 and c3-pawns are weak. He has some initiative because of his more active pieces, but Black can eventually neutralize his attacking prospects and equalize. This position was played for the first time in the game Anand – Karpov, Prague 2002, in which Karpov failed to solve the defensive problems and lost. Later (between years 2000 and 2003) Black has found the correct methods of defending and presently the whole line has the reputation to be acceptable for Black.

19.h4

Later, in the second half of the year 2003, Karjakin tried twice against Topalov in their match in Leon the immediate 19.♕g4 (preserving good squares for the knight) 19...h6 20.♘f3 ♕e4 21.♕g3 ♕c2 22.♘h4 ♗e4 23.♖e1 d5 24.♗f1, and obtained the advantage subsequently mostly due to his opponent's mistakes – the position was equal at that moment.

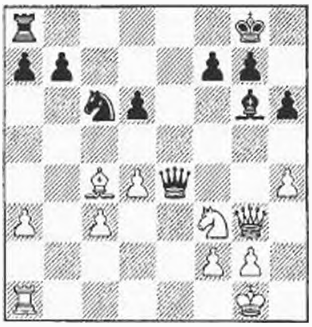
19...♕e7 20.♕g4 h6



21.♘f3

This move is with the idea to occupy the e-file. White has also tested here the move 21.♘h3 planning to bring this knight to the f4-square. It is very well placed there attacking the bishop on g6 as well as the d5-square. Black can defend with 21...♕e4 (it was evidently weaker for Black to play 21...♕f6 22.♖e1 ♗f5 23.♕f3 ♔f8!? 24.♘f4 ♗d7 25.g3 ♖e8 26.♖xe8+ ♗xe8 27.♕e4, and White had the initiative Anand – Karpov, Prague 2002) 22.♕g3 ♘a5 (in the game Topalov – Gelfand, Monaco 2003, Black played 22...♖c8 23.♗f1 ♘e7 24.♕xd6 ♘f5 25.♕b4 ♘xh4 26.d5 ♗f5 27.♕xe4 ♗xe4 28.c4 ♘f5 29.f3 ♗c2 30.♖c1 ♗a4 31.♔f2 b6 32.♗d3 ♘d6 and equalized) 23.♗a2 ♕d3 24.♖f1, and here after 24...♖d8 (instead of 24...♕xg3? 25.fxg3 ♖c8? 26.h5 ♗d3 27.♗xf7+ ♔f8 28.♖f2 and White was winning Grischuk – Adams, Halkidiki 2002) 25.♘f4 ♕xg3 26.fxg3 ♗h7 White had nothing decisive. White's other possibility was leading only to a draw after 21.h5 ♗xh5 22.♕xh5 hxg5 23.♖d1 ♖f8 24.♖d3 ♕e1+ 25.♔h2 ♕xf2 26.♖h3 ♕f4+ 27.♔g1 ♕c1+ with a perpetual, Movsesian – Gelfand, Bled 2002.

21...♕e4 22.♕g3



22...♖d8

This is a solid defensive move. It was also interesting for Black to try 22...♕c2 as well as 22...♘a5, with the idea to organize some immediate counterplay against the weak white pawns.

23.♖e1 ♕f5

Now it is not good for Black to play 23...♕c2 anymore, because of 24.♗d5 ♗h5 25.♕f4 – and the white rook on e1 is defended and White counters 25...♕xc3 with 26.g4 ♗g6 27.h5, capturing the f7-pawn.

24.♗a2 ♕f6

Black is defending against ♗b1.

25.♘h2

It was interesting for White to try 25.♗d5!?↑ (recommended by GM Huzman), and if Black plays 25...♔f8 just like in the game, then White has 26.♘d2, and 26...♕f5 is not as good anymore as in the game (White preserves the initiative too, after 26...♖e8 27.♖xe8+ ♔xe8 28.h5) 27.♗e4 ♕f6 28.♗xg6 ♕xg6 29.♕xg6 fxg6 30.♖e6 ♔f7 31.d5 ♘e7 32.c4 b5 (otherwise Black is beyond salvation after ♘e4) 33.♘e4 bxc4 34.♘xd6+ ♔f8 35.♘xc4 ♖xd5 36.♘e5, and despite the numerous exchanges Black's defence in this endgame is really difficult, because of his passive pieces.

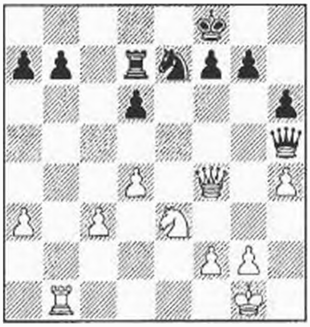
25...♕f5 26.♘g4 ♔f8

This move is with the idea to avoid the pins along the g-file and to prepare eventually the exchange of the rooks along the e-file (sometime later when the d6-pawn would not be hanging).

27.♗b1 ♕h5 28.♕f4

White does not have much either after 28.♘e3 ♗xb1 29.♖xb1 b6, and if 30.a4 with the idea to follow with ♖b5, then Black plays 30...♕a5.

28...♗xb1 29.♖xb1 ♖d7 30.♘e3 ♘e7



31.g3

White in fact admits with this move that Black has equalized. The alternative was leading to a somewhat more complex position after 31.c4 ♕g6 32.♖b5 ♕d3⇄, although Black was not worse at all.

31...♘d5

This method of defence is simple and very efficient – to exchange the active pieces of the opponent. White has no chances to prove any advantage after the trade of the knights.

32.♘xd5 ♕xd5 33.♖e1 ♖e7 34.♖xe7 ♔xe7 35.♕e3+ ♕e6 ½ – ½

White is better neither in the queen and pawn nor in the king and pawn endgames and therefore the adversaries agreed to a draw.

17 B19

Kramnik – Bareev

Round 3 14.01

Notes by S. Shipov

The circle has been completed! Bareev beat Ponomariov, who beat Kramnik and now it was time that Bareev lost too and we are back where it all started. So who is the best? All three of them have a win and a loss. Mathematics is helpless to determine by comparison. Chess and logics are not always in perfect harmony...

1.e4

It became absolutely evident now that Vladimir has changed his inner chess-sanctum completely just in a six months period! He has varied his opening repertoire with White and almost abandoned his favourite closed systems in favour of more aggressive openings. How and why has all this happened? I am going to venture a guess. Kramnik was preparing for **Black** quite profoundly as usual and was confronted with serious difficulties in plenty of different openings after 1.e4. So the gloomy prospects for Black convinced him of the power of the first move 1.e4 for White. Accordingly after a hard and strenuous work he understood that he was completely prepared to play it for **White** then.

1...c6

Evgeny has been playing the Caro-Kann Defence for many years as a completely reliable bomb–shelter.

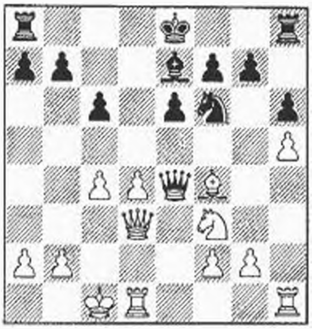
2.d4 d5 3.♘c3!

I have the feeling that should be better than 3.e5, although in general it is mostly a matter of knowledge and style too.

3...dxe4 4.♘xe4 ♗f5 5.♘g3 ♗g6 6.h4 h6 7.♘f3 ♘d7 8.h5 ♗h7 9.♗d3 ♗xd3 10.♕xd3 ♘gf6 11.♗f4 e6 12.0–0–0 ♗e7 13.♘e4 ♘xe4 14.♕xe4 ♘f6 15.♕d3

I am sure that both opponents played all these moves rather quickly. They know the fine points of theory perfectly.

15...♕d5! 16.c4 ♕e4



Black simplifies the position and this should facilitate his defence, no doubt about that.

17.♕xe4 ♘xe4 18.♗e3

This endgame is not as simple as it seems at first sight. White plans to exploit later the weaknesses on Black's kingside which is a bit cramped by the h5–pawn. Black in his turn can attack White's central pawns.

18...♘d6

This is a novelty. Bareev preserves the f6-square for the bishop. Black has tried here 18...0–0–0 as well as 18...♘f6. He must defend very carefully in both cases. There have not been any games played at a really high level so I will refrain from citations.

19.b3 ♗f6 20.g4!

It was important to deprive the black knight of the f5–square.

20...b5!

This counterstrike is typical for the Caro-Kann Defence. Black is attempting to weaken the light squares in White's camp.

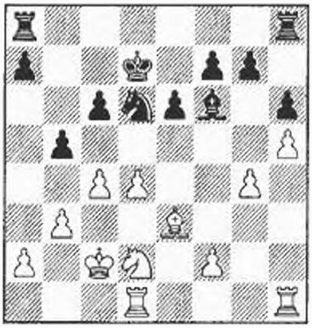
21.♘d2!

White c–pawn must remain on c4.

21...♔d7

Black connects the rooks in that fashion. He could have tried 21...0–0–0 with the same idea, but probably Bareev intended to use the rook on a8 to support the eventual pawn–advance a7–a5–a4.

22.♔c2



22...♗d8?

This is an amazing mistake. Black obviously intended to bring this bishop to a5. What else? He loses two tempi unnecessarily as a result! He had to play simply with the h8-rook instead with a good game.

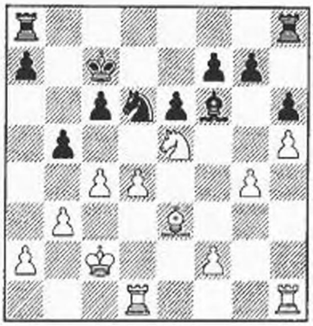
23.♘f3!

White's knight abandons the defence of the c4-pawn and is redeployed to e5 with tempo. How could have Bareev missed that? It is a miracle of Nature...

23...♗f6

Or 23...bxc4 24.♘e5+ ♔c7 25.bxc4 ♗f6 26.♗f4 ♗xe5 27.♗xe5 f6 28.♗f4 ♔d7 29.♖b1! and White remains with a clear advantage.

24.♘e5+ ♔c7



25.c5!

This pawn advance turns out to be very strong without the trade of the b-pawns on c4. The black knight now has no good squares to retreat.

25...♗xe5

This is a sad necessity in order to save the f7-pawn.

26.dxe5 ♘c8

Now if the black knight manages to come to d5 without any rearrangement of the white pieces Black will enjoy an excellent position. White does not intend to sit back and wait, however...

27.♖h3 ♘e7 28.♖f3 ♖hf8 29.♖d6!

Should Black exchange this annoying rook at some moment, White will have a powerful passed pawn then.

29...a5!

If Black centralizes his knight at first – 29...♘d5 30.♗d2 a5, then after 31.g5 hxg5 32.♗xg5 there is no defence against h5–h6 and the f7-pawn will be lost in a flourish of trumpets.

30.g5!

White has no other way to break through.

30...hxg5

After 30...♘f5 White has the exchange sacrifice 31.♖xf5!? exf5 32.gxh6 with excellent prospects.

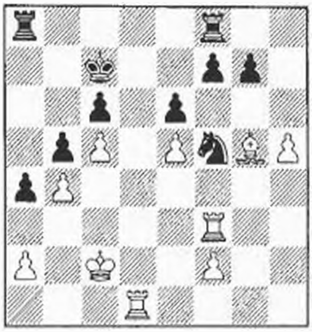
31.♗xg5 ♘f5

This is the best square for the black knight to defend from.

32.♖d1

White is threatening now to double the rooks and penetrate on d7.

32...a4 33.b4



This is a really important moment.

33...♔c8?!

I will dare to criticize that move! It is quite possible that Evgeny did not see how White could penetrate after the line in the game. He could and did, however! Black could have counterattacked instead with 33...♖h8 34.♖fd3 ♖af8! and in case of a check on d7 the black king retreats to b8 – 35.♖d7+ ♔b8 – What now? The h5–pawn is hanging... It looks like White's only way to try to play for a win is 36.♗d8!? – a pawn sacrifice with the idea to occupy the seventh rank with both rooks. It is hard to tell whether that wins. Our analysis failed to find a win for White, for example: 36...♖xh5! 37.♗b6 (Black must consider also 37.♗c7+ ♔c8 38.♗b6.) 37...♖h4 (Black can also play 37...♖h2 38.♖1d2 g5 and the position is rather unclear.) 38.a3 ♖c4+ 39.♔b2 g5 and one of the white rooks goes to the corner, but the other one will be cut off from the d7–square with – 40.♖a7 ♖d4! Generally speaking Black had good chances for a draw in these lines.

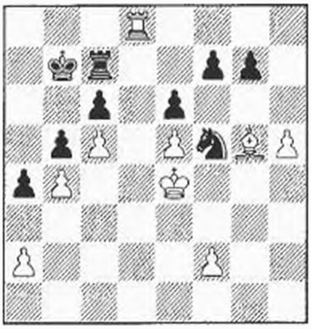
34.♖fd3 ♖a7 35.♖d8+ ♖xd8 36.♖xd8+ ♔b7

The rook defends the seventh rank behind the back of his king.

37.♔c3 ♔a6

This is a quite original redeployment. The black king lets the rook back into action.

38.♔d3 ♖c7 39.♔e4 ♔b7 40.♖d1 ♔c8 41.♖d8+ ♔b7



Black is totally passive. He is sit-ting back and waiting!

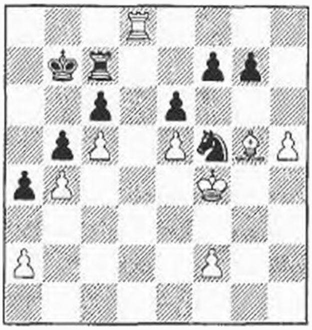
42.♔f4!

Note that White **is not placing** his pawn on a3! This is going to be a reserved extra tempo for the future. The champion possesses an immaculate technique – he amasses small advantages and transfers them into a magnificent win in the end.

42...♖c8 43.♖d7+ ♖c7 44.♖d3 ♔c8

After 44...♖c8 White has the powerful 45.♗d8! and then the rook goes to d7 – 45...♔b8 46.♔g5 ♔a8 47.♖d7 ♔b8 48.a3! ♔a8 (48...♘h6 49.♗e7!) 49.♗c7 ♘h6 50.♗d6 and Black is in total zugzwang.

45.♖d8+ ♔b7



It looks like White cannot break through. In fact – he wins in three!

46.♗f6!!

This is an exquisite tactical strike. White's rook pawn now becomes extremely dangerous.

46...g6

White wins the king and pawn endgame if Black accepts the sacrifice with – 46...gxf6 47.exf6 ♖c8 (what else?) 48.♖xc8 ♔xc8 49.♔g5 ♘d4 (49...♔d7 50.h6) 50.h6 ♘f3+ 51.♔h5 ♘e5 52.h7 ♘g6 53.♔h6 ♔d7 54.♔g7 e5 55.h8♕ ♘xh8 56.♔xh8 ♔e6 57.♔g7 e4 (57...a3 58.f3!) 58.a3! – and now you can see the importance of the reserved extra tempo! Black is lost because of the zugzwang.

47.hxg6 fxg6 48.♔g5 1–0

White is going to take care of the e6-pawn after the g6-pawn and Black has nothing to do about that. Therefore Bareev resigned. This was a superb positional achievement by Kramnik!

18 E12

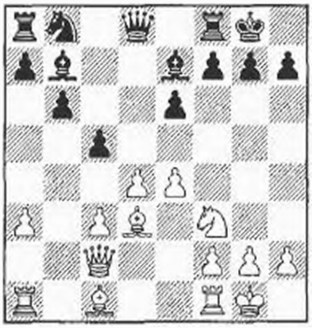
Krasenkow – Ponomariov

Round 3 14.01

Notes by S. Shipov

The FIDE world-champion had a hard task that day, since he saved a really difficult position! The widely shared opinion was that his position was just hopeless, but it proved to be not so easy to find a direct win. Michail failed to find it too during the game. Naturally he must have done it later, but only in the analysis...

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 e6 3.c4 b6 4.♘c3 ♗b7 5.a3 d5 6.cxd5 ♘xd5 7.♕c2 ♘xc3 8.bxc3 ♗e7 9.e4 0–0 10.♗d3 c5 11.0–0



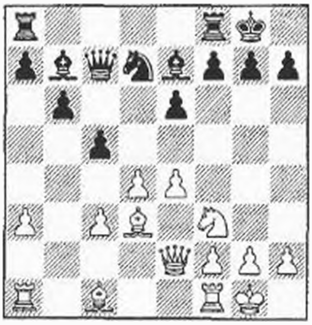
11...♕c7

I think that move to be not the most reliable. The great majority of the grandmasters prefer to put the queen to another square – 11...♕c8 in order to ensure the exchange of the light-squared bishops on a6.

12.♕e2!

Black will now exchange neither the bishops, nor the queens.

12...♘d7



13.e5!

This is White's standard set-up in this pawn structure. He concedes the d5-square to the opponent indeed, but begins a kingside attack. One of the arguments for this "positional trade" is the fact that it becomes extremely difficult for Black now to find a useful application for the passive knight on d7.

13...♖fd8 14.h4

This is a novelty. White sends the rook pawn towards the black king just for a start. Later he intends to bring there the majority of his forces. White had tried here before: 14.♗e3 ♖ac8 15.♘g5 ♘f8 16.♕h5 ♗xg5 17.♕xg5 cxd4 18.♗xd4 ♕d7 19.♖fe1 ♖xc3 20.♗xc3 ♕xd3 21.♗b4 ♘g6 and Black had an acceptable compensation for the exchange, which proved to be good enough for a draw in the game, Ahlander – Danielsen, Denmark 1995.

14...♘f8 15.h5

This is an interesting moment. Black must decide now whether to allow h5-h6 or not? Ruslan decided not to prevent it and so White was also faced with a problem – to play h5-h6 or not?

15...♖ac8

There is no direct refutation of the move 15...h6. Ruslan was probably afraid of some sacrifice on h6, but not immediately, of course...

16.♗e3

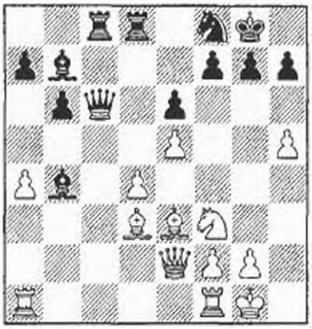
This is mostly a matter of psychology. The threat should not be dangerous for Black; otherwise he would have prevented it!

16...♕c6 17.a4!

It might be useful to reduce Black's possibilities on the queenside.

17...cxd4 18.cxd4 ♗b4?!

This was a serious imprecision. Black had to play 18...♕d5 with the idea to follow with ♖c3.



19.h6!

Now, after Black's bishop is not on e7 White will occupy the dark squares after this move!

19...g6 20.♖fc1 ♕d5 21.♗g5!

White's bishop now dominates on the diagonal that was so politely vacated by the black bishop.

21...♖xc1+ 22.♖xc1 ♖c8 23.♖xc8 ♗xc8 24.♕b2! a5 25.♕c1 ♗b7

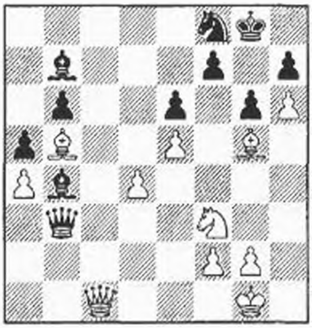
White created plenty of problems for Black to solve while defending and now was the time to reap the harvest. Black's king is rather vulnerable as well as the b6-pawn.

26.♗b5!

This is another strong move with the idea to go to g7 with the white queen! He wants to control the d7-square to accomplish that purpose. The bishop can also join in the attack of the f7-pawn via the e8-square. In case of the immediate 26.♕f4 Black manages to defend successfully the f6-square with 26...♘d7 27.♗b5 ♗c6!.

26...♕b3!

This was Black's only chance to prolong the fight.



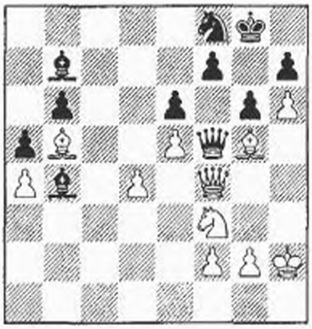
I consider this to be the key-moment of the game.

27.♕f4?!

This was too straightforward! Black remains on the brink of disaster and still survives after the following line – 27.♕c7 ♗xf3 28.♗e8 ♕b1+ 29.♔h2 ♕f5 30.♗f6 ♕h5+ 31.♔g1 g5! 32.gxf3 g4! 33.f4 ♗d2 34.♕xb6 g3! 35.fxg3 ♗e3+ 36.♔g2 ♕e2+ with a draw by a perpetual. White's best is 27.♗c6! – and after the exchange of the light-squared bishops White's queen has a free hand for pillage in Black's rear. It can capture on b6, or it can go to f6 in order to checkmate. Meanwhile its black counterpart cannot create any effective counter threats, since the white knight on f3 has cemented White's position. Should Black avoid the trade of the bishops – then the attack of the f7-pawn proves to be decisive. See some simple variations – 27...♗xc6 (27...♗c8 28.♗e8! ♗d7 29.♗xd7 ♘xd7 30.♕c8+ ♘f8 31.♕d8!; 27...♗a6 28.♗e8 ♕c4 29.♕f4!; 28...♗c4 29.♗f6 ♕d3 30.♘g5+-) 28.♕xc6 ♗a3 29.♔h2 ♕b1 30.♕c7! – and Black is in a zugzwang and his every move leads to disaster! He cannot pass according to the rules of chess!

27...♕b1+ 28.♔h2 ♕f5

Black managed to cover the vital f6-square!



29.♕xf5

White would have preserved the tension with the move 29.♕e3, but that would not have created any direct threats against Black.

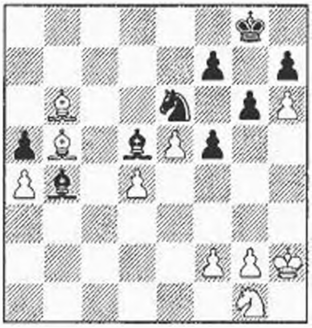
29...exf5 30.♗d8

White wins a pawn indeed, but Black activates his pieces to the absolute maximum.

30...♘e6 31.♗xb6 ♗d5

The blockade is now complete.

32.♘g1



32...f6!

Black's king joins too. White's winning chances now seem quite problematic. Maybe they are already non-existent!

33.♘e2 ♔f7 34.♔g1 ♗d2 35.g3 ♔e7 36.♘f4

After 36.f4 ♗e3+ 37.♔f1 fxe5 38.fxe5 ♗d2 39.♔f2 White does not achieve anything either. Black can simply sit down and wait.

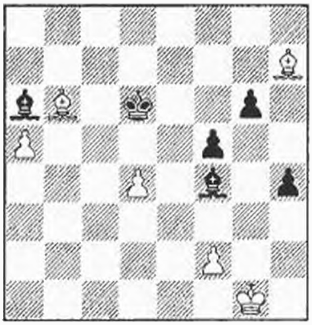
36...♘xf4 37.exf6+ ♔xf6 38.gxf4 ♔e6 39.♗e8 ♗xf4 40.♗xa5

White preserved some minute chances to succeed after 40.♗xg6 ♗xh6 41.♗xh7 – this was still an extra pawn after all...

40...♗xh6

The audience started wondering at that moment: "Who was trying to win?".

41.♗b6 ♗c4 42.♗c6 ♗f4 43.a5 ♗a6 44.♗g2 ♔d7 45.♗d5 ♔d6 46.♗g8 h5 47.♗h7 h4

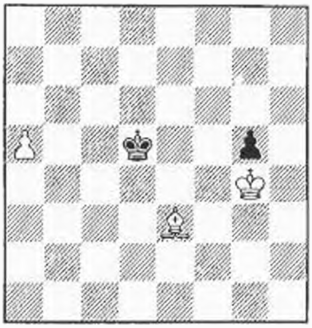


White now needed to play precisely...

48.♔g2!

After 48.♗xg6? h3 49.♗xf5 h2+ 50.♔g2 ♗b7+ 51.f3 ♗xf3+ 52.♔xf3 h1♕+ 53.♔xf4 Black would have remained with a queen against a couple of bishops and some pawns. It would have been a draw anyway...

48...♗e2 49.f3 h3+ 50.♔xh3 ♗f1+ 51.♔h4 g5+ 52.♔h5 ♗e2 53.♗xf5 ♗xf3+ 54.♗g4 ♗xg4+ 55.♔xg4 ♗e3 56.d5 ♔xd5! 57.♗xe3 ½ – ½



The a8-square was of the "wrong colour" and therefore the opponents signed the scoresheet with a draw in that position! The simple line 57...♔c6 58.a6 ♔c7 59.♗a7 (this was an attempt not to let the black king to the dreamland corner) 59...♔c6! 60.♗e3 (Black was threatening ♔c6-b5!)

60...♔c7 was just too easy for grandmasters to calculate.

19 **B49**

Ju.Polgar – Timman

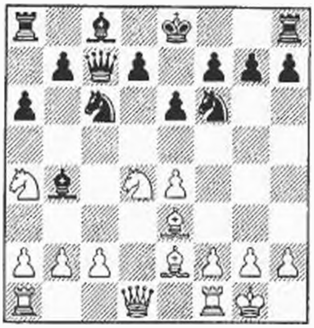
Round 3 14.01

Notes by S. Shipov

Judit won this game surprisingly easily. There were no spectacular moments – she just played better by a margin...

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 e6 5.♘c3 a6 6.♗e2 ♕c7 7.0–0 ♘f6 8.♗e3 ♗b4 9.♘a4

This is nowadays the most popular system for White in the Paulsen variation.



9...♗e7

It is very dangerous for Black to accept the pawn sacrifice – 9...♘xe4 10.♘xc6 ♕xc6 11.♘b6 ♖b8 12.♗f3! and Black is in big trouble.

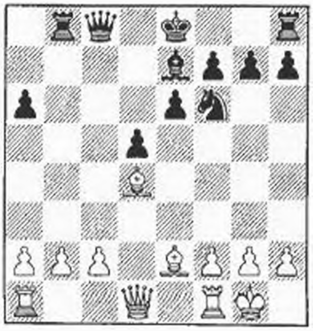
10.♘xc6 bxc6 11.♘b6 ♖b8 12.♘xc8 ♕xc8

Black used to capture on c8 with the rook before, sacrificing the a6 pawn. It is all well-known theory by now and a pawn is a pawn after all...

13.♗d4 d5

The famous game Kasparov – Anand, Linares 2002, followed with 13...0–0 14.e5 ♘d5 15.c4 ♘f4 16.♗f3 ♕c7 17.♖e1 ♘g6 18.c5! and White had some initiative.

14.exd5 cxd5



15.c4!

This is a thematic move! White opens the game in order to exploit the power of the bishop pair.

15...0–0

After 15...dxc4 16.♕a4+ ♕d7 17.♕xd7+ ♘xd7 18.♗xc4 ♗f6 19.♗xf6 gxf6 20.♗xa6 ♘c5 21.♗c4 ♖xb2 22.a4, the endgame was difficult for Black in the game Dolmatov – Tunik, Ekaterinburg 2002.

16.♖c1!N

This is a very purposeful novelty. White played very enterprisingly in the game Gallagher – Yuldachev, Sangli 2000, but after 16.♗e5 ♖b6 17.♕d4 ♗c5 18.♕h4 ♘e4 19.♗d3 f5 20.♗xe4?! fxe4 21.♖ad1 ♖b7! 22.♕g4 (22.cxd5 exd5 23.♖xd5 ♗xf2+!) 22...♖f5 23.♗d4 ♗xd4 24.♖xd4 ♖xb2 he remained a pawn down and lost soon after.

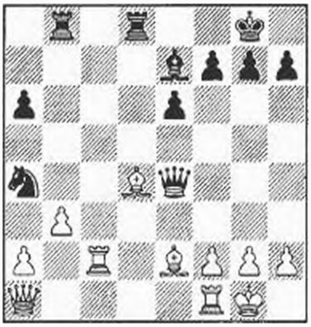
16...dxc4 17.♖xc4 ♕b7 18.♕c2

It is all so simple! White has two pawns against one on the queenside. This guarantees a slight but stable advantage and White must play in a classical positional style.

18...♘d5 19.b3 ♖fd8 20.♕b2 ♘b6?!

It was probably more stubborn for Black to defend with 20...♗f6.

21.♖c2 ♘a4 22.♕a1 ♕e4



Jan is trying to enter some wild complications with his young rival. She is more than willing to comply since she calculates much better than the gray-haired veteran...

23.♖d2 ♗c5?! 24.♗xc5! ♘xc5

White would have remained with two bishops for a rook in the line 24...♖xd2 25.♗f3 ♕c2 26.♗a7!.

25.♕c3 ♖xd2 26.♕xd2

The "wild complications" just led to some simplifications that were quite favourable for White. The a6-pawn is about to fall now.

26...g6? 27.♖c1

The knight has nowhere to run now and you can guess easily who is to blame!

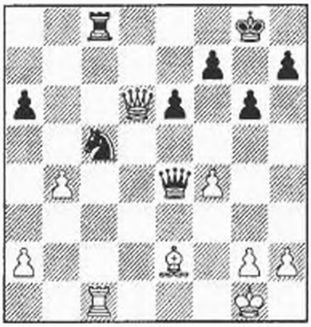
27...♕e5 28.f4!

Judit is impeccable when she is winning.

28...♕f5

Or 28...♘e4 29.fxe5! ♘xd2 30.♗xa6 ♖a8 31.♖c6+–.

29.♕d6 ♖c8 30.b4 ♕e4



31.♕d2! 1–0

Black loses a piece!

20 **E06**

Radjabov – Topalov

Round 3 14.01

Notes by S. Shipov

Bad luck cannot possibly last forever. The Bulgarian grandmaster managed to compensate his poor start and won a superb game. The tournament situation of the young and talented player from Azerbaidjan worsened considerably instead!

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 d5 4.g3

Whenever you play against such a fighter as Vesselin you have to be ready, in case of 4.♘c3, to encounter the super-sharp Vienna variation – 4...dxc4 5.e4 ♗b4 6.♗g5 c5 etc. You will have to be very well prepared then...

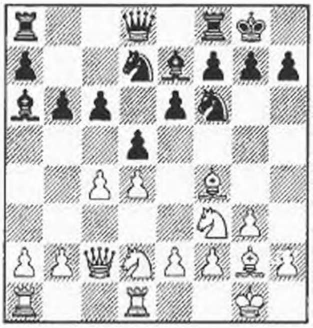
4...♗b4+ 5.♗d2 ♗e7

This is a very useful manoeuvre because the white bishop cannot be fianchettoed anymore.

6.♗g2 0–0 7.0–0 c6 8.♕c2 b6 9.♗f4 ♗a6 10.♘bd2

The tournament practice shows that White cannot rely to obtain an opening advantage with a knight on d2, since it is not exerting any pressure against Black's centre from there! It is more fashionable for White to play here 10.b3 with the idea to develop that beast to the more active c3-square.

10...♘bd7 11.♖fd1



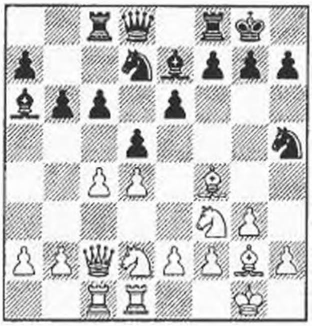
11...♖c8

Black gets a quite good game after the other popular line – 11...♘h5 12.♗e3 ♖c8 13.♘e5 ♘hf6 14.♕a4 ♘b8 15.♖ac1 b5! 16.cxb5 cxb5 17.♕b3 ♕b6 18.f3 b4 and he had excellent counterchances, Filippov – Landa, Kazan 1995. It was possible that Vesselin was afraid of the move 13.g4!?.

12.♖ac1

This is a novelty. White used to play before 12.e4, but that move was not dangerous for Black at all. The complications after 12...dxc4 13.♘xc4 ♘xe4 are in White's favour – 14.♘fe5! ♗xc4 15.♕xc4 ♘d6 16.♕a4 b5 17.♕xa7 ♖c7 18.♕a5 ♘xe5 19.dxe5 ♘c4 20.♕c3 ♕c8 21.a4 and Black's position is very difficult, Horvath – Kiss, Zalakaros 1995. It is much more reliable for Black to play 12...♗b7!, delaying the opening of the centre till more opportune times. It is not clear how White can proceed with his initiative then. After 12.♕a4 Black has 12...♗xc4 13.♘xc4 b5! 14.♕xa7 bxc4 and his position is quite promising thanks to his majority of pawns in the centre.

12...♘h5



13.e4?!

Oh, youth, youth...White compromises his pawn structure in such a way that the activity of his pieces is absolutely incapable of compensating it whatsoever. Of course it was much better to retreat with the bishop to e3 or e5.

13...♘xf4 14.gxf4 ♘f6!

This is the beginning of a powerful knight-manoeuvre.

15.♘e5

The other possibility: 15.e5 ♘h5 16.f5 ♘f4 leads to a slight edge for Black.

15...♘h5!

Vesselin exploits immediately the mistake of his young partner.

16.♕a4 ♗xc4

Naturally it is senseless for Black to retreat with that bishop, since White can simply capture the a7-pawn with tempo.

17.♘xc6

After 17.♘dxc4 Black can play the same move as in the game.

17...b5! 18.♕a6 ♖xc6!

This is a very powerful exchange

sacrifice. Black will be the attacking side from now on!

19.♕xc6 ♘xf4

This knight will be stronger than a couple of rooks.

20.♘xc4 bxc4

Black preserved his pawn centre and White's rooks are idle now.

21.exd5 exd5 22.♖c3

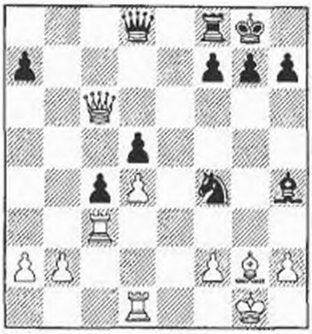
White is dreaming to give back the exchange but Black is relentless!

22...♗h4!

Black is threatening to come to g5 with his queen.

23.♖g3?!

After 23.♖f3!? ♕g5 24.♖xf4 ♕xf4 25.♖f1 Black can bring his bishop to a more promising diagonal with – 25...♗e7! 26.♕xd5 ♗d6 nevertheless White has substantial chances to draw the game after that, because of the opposite-coloured bishops. Teimour had to play probably like that following next with 27.♖b1! etc.



23...♖e8

I believe that Black should have played with an extra pawn after exchanging on g3 and g2. Vesselin preferred to play with an exchange down instead, showing that he was a real fighter. I must remind you that he lost in the previous round, playing too actively in a position with an exchange down. He is playing in the same hyperactive fashion in this game too and this time he is successful. Fate is tolerant towards the brave and ambitious... and particularly toward those who play according to the objective requirements of the position.

24.♖g4 ♖e6

Another black piece joins in the attack.

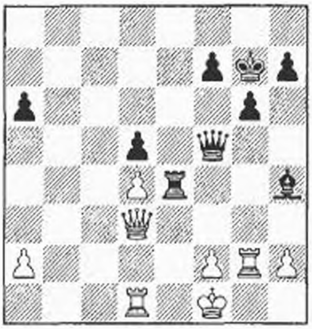
25.♕c5 ♘xg2 26.♖xg2

26.♔xg2 will be countered by the powerful 26...h5!.

26...a6

Black has only a pawn for the exchange, but he has a lasting initiative, since White's king is rather vulnerable. Additionally the white d4-pawn is potentially very weak too. It was much easier and more pleasant to play that position with Black. That was quite important in the forthcoming time-trouble.

27.♕a3 g6 28.♕c3 ♕e7 29.b3 ♕a3 30.♕c2 ♕e7 31.♔f1 cxb3 32.♕xb3 ♕d6 33.♕d3 ♕f4 34.♕d2 ♕f5 35.♕d3 ♖e4! 36.♕b3 ♔g7 37.♕d3



37...h5!

The rook pawn turns out to be a key

additional resource in the attack!

38.♕b3 ♗f6 39.♖g3 ♖f4 40.♕e3 h4 41.♖g2 ♖f3 42.♕e2 a5

Black does not need to be in a hurry since White is helpless.

43.♔g1 ♖f4 44.♔h1 ♖e4 45.♕f1 a4 46.♖d2 ♗xd4 47.♕d1 ♗e5 48.f3

It is equally bad for White to play 48.♖xd5 h3 49.♖g1 ♕f4 50.♖g3 ♕f2–+.

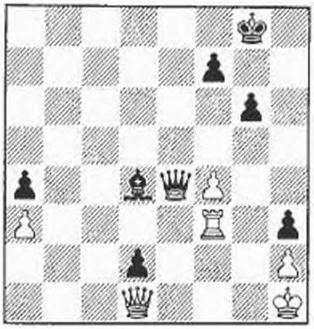
48...♖b4 49.♖d3 h3

This powerful pawn is now a part of a checkmating net around the white king.

50.♖e2 d4 51.♖f2 ♗f4 52.♕e2 ♖b1+ 53.♖d1 d3 54.♕f1 ♖xd1 55.♕xd1 d2

Black's strategy has been totally triumphant. White is completely squeezed...

56.♖e2 ♕d3 57.♖f2 ♗e3 58.♖f1 ♗d4 59.a3 ♔g8 60.f4 ♕e4+ 61.♖f3



61...♗f2! 0–1

This is a beautiful final accord in a brilliant positional symphony. One must admit that the bishop was stronger than a rook in this game...

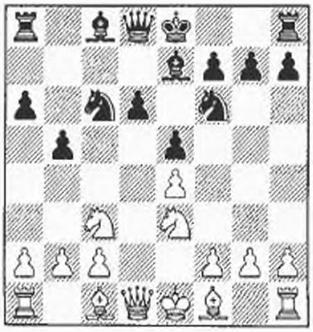
21 **B32**

Shirov – Ivanchuk

Round 3 14.01

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 e5 5.♘b5 d6 6.♘1c3 a6 7.♘a3 ♘f6 8.♘c4 b5 9.♘e3 ♗e7

Ponomariov grabbed that pawn 9...b4 10.♘cd5 ♘xe4, but lost subsequently: Anand – Ponomariov, Wijk aan Zee 2003.



10.♗d3

Anand fianchettoed this bishop in another game: 10.g3 and won later, Anand – Radjabov, Linares 2003. Is he just stronger than Shirov, or the young generation (Ponomariov and Radjabov) has no idea how to play correctly in the opening? I think that at the moment that Shirov and Ivanchuk agreed to a draw, in the final position of the game, Black's chances were at least equal.

10...0–0 11.0–0 ♖b8 12.♘cd5 ♘xd5 13.exd5

Black can exchange favourably the dark-squared bishops with 13...♗g5 in case White captures with the knight 13.♘xd5.

13...♘a5 14.a4

It was worth considering for White to start some kingside action with: 14.f4.

14...b4 15.♗d2 f5

Black occupied some space in the centre as well as on the kingside and could have continued to improve his position, but obviously Ivanchuk was in a peaceful mood that day...

16.c3 bxc3 17.♗xc3 e4 18.♗c2 ♗f6 19.g3 ♗d7 20.♖b1 ♘b7 ½ – ½

22 **E34**

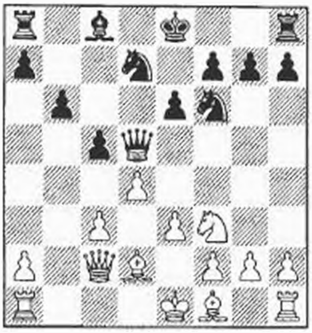
Bareev – Topalov

Round 4 15.01

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.♕c2 d5 5.cxd5 ♕xd5 6.e3 c5 7.♗d2 ♗xc3 8.bxc3

The thematic line here is – 8.♗xc3 cxd4 9.♗xd4 ♘c6. Capturing with the pawn fortifies White's centre indeed, but on the other hand it has a substantial drawback. White's dark-squared bishop, which is without an opponent becomes now restricted by its own white pawns.

8...b6 9.♘f3 ♘bd7



10.c4!

White will have to start activating his dark-squared bishop sooner or later. The straightforward move 10. ♗e2, is less precise and after 10...♗b7 11.0–0 0–0 12.♖fd1 ♕c6∞ Black had no problems in the game S.Ivanov – Solozhenkin, St.Petersburg 2003.

10...♕d6

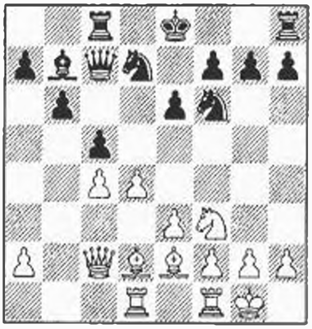
The tactical idea behind White's last move is that after 10...♕e4 White can play 11.♗d3 ♕g4 12.0–0 ♗b7 13.h3 ♕h5 14.♗e2± (Bareev). It is now easy to notice that Black could have developed his bishop on b7 on move 9 and that line would not have worked.

11.♗e2 ♗b7 12.♖d1

The natural move 12.0–0 was played in the ancient game Frydman – Regedzinski, Lodz 1938, but the Russian GM did not like it because of 12...♘g4!?.

12...♖c8 13.0–0 ♕c7

The move 13...♘g4 is not dangerous for White anymore because White can exploit the placement of the rook on d1 and apply the cardinal rule of strategy i.e. counter an attack on the side with a counterstrike in the centre. He plays – 14.d5!↑ and after 13...♗xf3 14.♗xf3 cxd4 15.exd4 ♕xd4 16.♗b4 ♖xc4 (it is too risky for Black to play 16...♕xc4?! because of 17.♕d2=∞ and the black king might be subjected to a very powerful attack in the centre of the board) 17.♕e2 (but of course not 17.♖xd4? since after 17...♖xc2 18.♖fd1 e5 19.♖4d2 ♖xd2 20.♖xd2 ♘c5–+ White has no compensation for his two pawns deficit) 17...♖xb4 18.♖xd4 ♖xd4∞ the position is with a non-standard material ratio and with mutual chances.



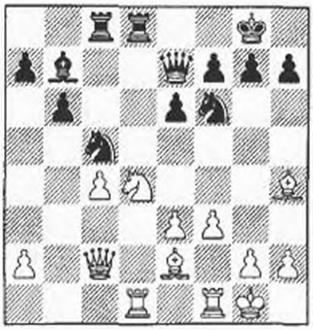
14.dxc5

Bareev keeps in mind the potential power of the two bishops and tries to open the game in the centre, but he pays the price of worsening his pawn structure on the queenside. It was interesting for him to sacrifice a pawn with the same idea – 14.d5!? exd5 15.♗c3 dxc4 16.♗xc4 ♗xf3 (after 16...0–0 Black should worry about 17.♘g5↑, because in that case 17...h6?? loses because of 18.♖xd7+–) 17.gxf3 0–0 18.♕f5=∞ and White has a good compensation for the sacrificed pawn.

14...♘xc5 15.♘d4 0–0 16.f3 ♖fd8 17.♗e1

17.♘b5!? ♕b8 18.♗e1 (Bareev).

17...♕e7 18.♗h4



18...♗c6!

Black is ready to give up his second bishop for White's knight. He did not like to defend the b5-square with 18...a6 because after 19.♖b1↑ the potential weakness of the b6-pawn might be worrisome for him.

19.♘b5

After 19.e4 ♗a4 20.♘b3 ♖xd1 21.♖xd1 ♕c7 22.♗g3 e5 23.♕b2= the position is equal.

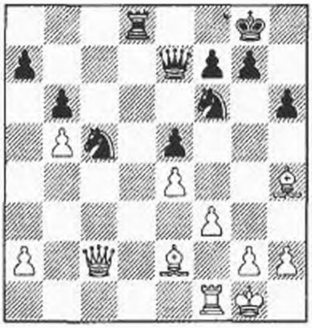
19...h6 20.♖xd8+ ♖xd8 21.e4

According to Bareev it was better for White to play 21.♖d1!? a6 (now, the creation of a weakness on b6 is not so dangerous because the trade of the last couple of rooks is unavoidable) 22.♖xd8+ ♕xd8 23.♘c3, but this is probably just a matter of choice.

21...♗xb5

This change of events is a bit surprising. Black is not only parting with his second bishop deliberately, but he also improves White's pawn structure in the process. I believe that plenty of players in Topalov's position would have preferred 21...e5. White can try to exploit the d5-square with 22.♘c3 ♘e6 23.♕b2!? (23.♘d5 ♕c5+ 24.♗f2 ♘d4 25.♕d3 ♘xe2+ 26.♕xe2 ♕d6=) 23...♕c5+ 24.♗f2 ♘d4 25.♗d3∞ and Black will have some problems to solve after the irresistible penetration of the white knight to d5.

22.cxb5 e5



23.♖d1

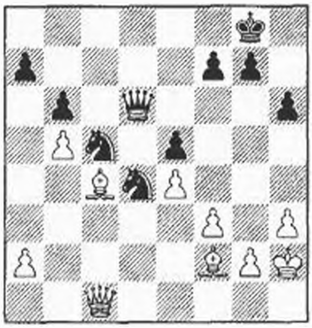
After 23.♗c4 ♘e6 24.♗xe6 ♕xe6 25.♖c1= a drawish position could have been reached much faster. White then dominates on the open c-file and that contains Black's aggressive attempts.

23...♘e6 24.♖xd8+ ♕xd8 25.♕c1 ♕d6 26.♗f2 ♘d7 27.♗c4 ♘d4

It was also possible for Black to play

27...♘dc5, because the exchange 28.♗xe6 ♘xe6∓ would have been already in favour of Black because of the absence of rooks on the board.

28.h3 ♘c5 29.♔h2



29...g5!?

According to Evgeny Bareev Black is already slightly better. He has some initiative indeed, but White is hardly risking anything in this position with his powerful bishop pair.

30.♕a3 ♕d7 31.♗g3 ♕e7 32.♕b4 h5 33.♔h1 ♕f6 34.♕a3 ♔g7!?

Topalov has always been an extremely active player. He now refuses to defend his a7-pawn and prefers to create immediate complications on the kingside. It will be just fair to admit that the active move in the game and 34...♕e7 are about equally strong. In the latter case there might follow: 35.♕b4 g4 36.fxg4 hxg4 37.h4 ♕f6 38.♕e1= and White will preserve the equality without too much of an effort.

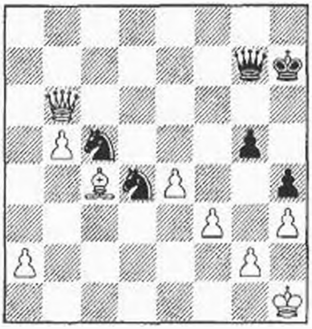
35.♕xa7 h4 36.♗xe5!?

This will soon turn out to be a powerful storm in a glass of water. White could have kept the balance with 36.♗h2 ♘xf3 37.♗xf7 ♘xh2 38.♗d5+ ♔g6 39.♔xh2=, or 36.♗e1 ♘xf3 37.gxf3 ♕xf3+ 38.♔g1 ♘xe4 39.♕xb6 ♘g3= (recommended by Bareev).

36...♕xe5 37.♕xf7+ ♔h6 38.♕f8+ ♕g7 39.♕d6+ ♔h7

After 39...♘de6 40.♗xe6 ♕a1+ 41.♔h2 ♕f6 White can capture one more pawn with 42.♕xb6 and Black has nothing better than to force a draw by a perpetual with 42...♕f4=.

40.♕xb6



40...♘xf3!=

White has now four pawns for the knight and that is more than sufficient compensation. Accordingly the Bulgarian grandmaster decided that it was high time to force a draw.

41.gxf3 ♕a1+ 42.♔g2 ♕b2+ 43.♔f1 ♕c1+ 44.♔f2 ½ – ½

After 44...♕d2+ 45.♗e2 ♘d3+ 46.♔g1 ♕xe2 47.♕c7+ ♔g6 48.♕c6+ the black king has nowhere to hide against the perpetual.

23 E15

Ivanchuk – Grischuk

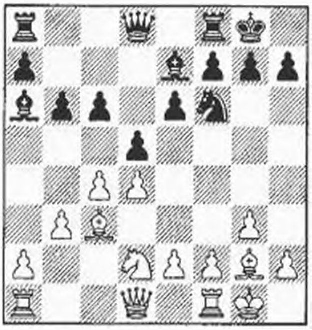
Round 4 15.01

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 b6 4.g3 ♗a6 5.b3 ♗b4+ 6.♗d2 ♗e7 7.♗g2 c6 8.♗c3 d5 9.♘e5

In the game Radjabov – Ju.Polgar,

Wijk aan Zee 2003, White played 9.♘bd2.

9...♘fd7 10.♘xd7 ♘xd7 11.♘d2 0–0 12.0–0 ♘f6



Black controls now the d4-square. He plans next to prepare c6-c5 and after the possible e4, e4xd5 and d4xc5 by White, he wants to be able to play d5-d4. Black often plays here also 12...♖c8 and after 13.e4 counters with 13...c5. The development of the game after that is more or less forced: 14.exd5 exd5 15.dxc5 dxc4 16.c6 cxb3 17.♖e1 ♗b5 18.axb3 ♗xc6 19.♗xc6 ♖xc6 20.♖xa7. This position has been tested numerous times and the results confirm that White has the advantage.

13.♖c1 ♖c8 14.e4 c5 15.exd5

White can also try to preserve the e-file closed: 15.dxc5 d4 16.♗b2 bxc5. The arising position is similar to that in the game with the addition of a white pawn on e4 and a black pawn on e6. The game Rukavina – Dizdar, Vrbas 1982, continued: 17.e5 ♘d7 18.f4 ♕b6 19.♘e4 ♗b7 20.♕h5 a5 21.♖cd1 f5 22.exf6 ♘xf6 23.♕e2 ♖ce8, with a double-edged position.

15...exd5 16.dxc5 d4 17.♗b2 bxc5

As a result of some conflict in the centre Black obtained a powerful protected passed pawn in the centre that should help him stay out of trouble. Ivanchuk decided to avoid the unnecessary risk and offered a draw that was accepted.

18.♖e1 ½ – ½

24 **E12**

Karpov – Ju.Polgar

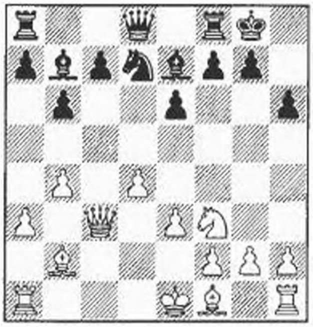
Round 4 15.01

Notes by N. Vlassov

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 e6 3.c4 b6 4.a3 ♗b7 5.♘c3 d5 6.cxd5 ♘xd5 7.♕c2 ♘xc3 8.♕xc3 h6 9.e3 ♘d7 10.b4

White failed to achieve much after 10.♗b5 ♗d6 11.♗c6 ♗xc6 12.♕xc6 0–0 13.b4 e5 14.♗b2 ♕e7 15.0–0 e4 16.♘d2 ♘f6 17.b5 ♖fe8 18.a4 ♖ad8 19.h3 ½ Dreev – Aseev, Barnaul 1988.

10...♗e7 11.♗b2 0–0



12.♖d1

Karpov is doing his best in order to stop c7-c5 – the move that frees Black's position. He falls behind in the development of the kingside, though. It is possible that he had to play instead 12.♖c1 c5 (12...♗d6?! could be met with 13.d5±) 13.dxc5 ♗f6 14.♕d2 ♗xb2 15.♕xb2 bxc5 16.♗e2. White manages to castle and has a slight advantage. It is not so good to play 12.♗d3 c5! 13.dxc5 ♗f6 and really bad to play 12.d5? ♗f6∓.

12...a5!

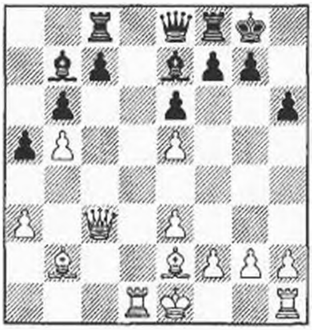
Black has a lead in development and exploits it starting active actions first. White's too advanced pawns on the queenside become a target.

13.b5

White did not have much of a choice – after 13.♗e2? axb4 14.axb4 ♘f6+ Black's advantage was too great.

13...♖c8 14.♕b3

After 14.♗c4 ♘f6! 15.0–0 c6 16.bxc6 ♗xc6 White has problems with the knight on f3, the queen and the bishop are under attack by the rook on c8 and on top of everything Black is threatening to create a passed pawn on the queenside. White in fact has no compensation for all this. He could play 14.♕d2 c6 15.bxc6 ♗xc6 16.♗a6 ♖c7 17.0–0 but that solved only part of the problems, since after 17...♗a4 18.♖c1 b5! the bishop on a6 is trapped! I will try to suggest 14.♘e5!? ♘xe5 15.dxe5 ♕e8 16.♗e2! – and White can still get some counterplay if Black captures the sacrificed pawn.



SS. – "I seriously doubt that a grandmaster in a normal state of mind would even think about capturing a pawn like that. 16...♗xg2 (it was much more natural to play instead 16...c6, and Black would have remained with a clear positional advantage). After 17.♖g1 Black must make up his mind what the right square for the bishop is. For example after 17...♗d5 White organizes a powerful attack with: 18.♖xd5! exd5 19.e6 f6 20.♕d3 ♔h8 (20...g5 21.♕f5) 21.♕f5 ♖g8 22.♖g6+−. In case Black retreats with the bishop 17...♗b7, then White can choose between two different ways to proceed with his initiative. Have a look at some of the interesting lines: 18.f4 c6 19.f5 cxb5 (19...exf5 20.e6 f6 21.e4 ♗c5 22.♖xg7+!! ♔xg7 23.♖d7+) 20.♕d4 ♖d8 21.♕g4 ♖xd1+ 22.♗xd1 g6 23.fxg6 fxg6 24. ♕xg6+ ♕xg6 25.♖xg6+ ♔h7 26.♖xe6 and White has an excellent counterplay, or 18.e4!? ♗xe4 (18...♔h7 19.♕g3 ♖g8 20.♕f4 c6 21. ♗h5 g6 22.♗c1 ♗g5 23.♖xg5 hxg5 24.♕xg5 ♖h8 25.bxc6 ♗xc6 26.♗f3) 19.♕g3 g6 (19...♗g6!? 20.h4 h5 21. ♗xh5 ♕xb5 22.♗xg6 fxg6 23.♕xg6 ♖f7 24.♕xe6 ♖e8) 20.♕e3 ♗f5 21.♕xh6. It looks like Black should retreat 17...♗e4, and then he remains with an extra pawn indeed, but the position is absolutely unclear."

14...c6 15.bxc6

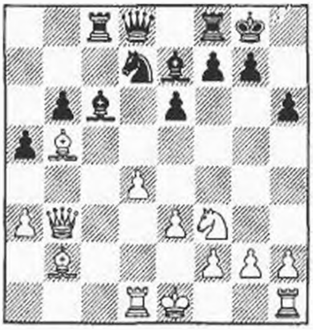
In case of 15.♗e2 cxb5 16.♗xb5 Black has a pleasant choice between 16...♗d5, 16...♘f6 and 16...♗e4 – with an advantage in all lines.

15...♗xc6

White now has serious problems to develop his kingside because of his bad play in the opening.

16.♗b5?

White is worse after 16.♖c1 a4 17.♕d3 b5∓. He had better try to complete his development and castle: 16.♗a6! ♖c7 17.0–0 a4 (Black's winning chances would be minimal after 17...b5 18.♗xb5 ♖b7 19.a4 ♕b8 20.♗a3 ♗xb5 21.axb5 ♖xb5 22.♕a2 ♗b4 and the draw would be the most likely outcome.) 18.♕d3 ♕a8 19.♕e2 ♖b8 20.♗d3 b5 21.e4! and White has some active counterplay!



16...♗b4+!

Judit would not miss the opportunity to deprive his opponent from castling!

17.axb4 ♗xb5 18.bxa5

It is even worse for White to play 18.d5? a4 19.♕a3 e5! – and White is lost because he cannot even bring the rook on h1 to the defence of his king stranded in the centre.

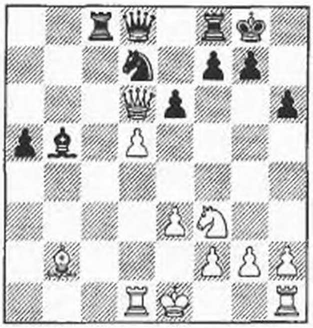
18...♗c4 19.♕a3

It was worth trying for White 19.♕a4 bxa5 20.♗c3. Black can be tempted now by the attractive piece sacrifice: 20...♕f6!? 21.♕xd7 ♕g6 22.d5 ♕c2 23.♗d2 ♖fd8 24.♕a7 ♖xd5 (24...♕d3 25.♕xf7+ ♔xf7 26.♘e5+ ♔f6 27.♘xd3 ♗xd3 28.♗xa5 ♖xd5 29.♗d2 – and White has good chances to draw.) 25.♕b7 ♕d3! 26.♕xc8+ ♔h7 27.♕xc4 ♕xc4 28.♖c1 ♕d3 29.♖c3, and White should save the game after some good defending. The endgame after 20...♕b6 21.♕xd7 ♗b5 22.♖b1 ♗xd7 23.♖xb6 ♖xc3 is rather difficult for White. I think 20...♕c7! is the best for Black. 21.♗xa5 ♕b7∓. The compensation for the pawn is just tremendous. The rook on h1 is out of play and White's king is stuck in the centre. It would take a miracle to save a position like that and plenty of luck too...

19...bxa5∓ 20.♕d6

White's position is bad in all lines: 20.e4 f5∓; 20.♖c1 ♕b6∓; 20.♗c3 ♕f6!∓; 20.h4 ♗d5∓.

20...♗b5 21.d5



21...♖c2

Black must win after 21...♘c5 22.♕g3 f6∓, but the move in the game is at least as good.

22.♖d2

White's situation is hopeless after 22.♘d4 ♖xb2 23.♘xb5 ♖xb5 24.dxe6 fxe6 25.♕xd7 ♕xd7 26.♖xd7 ♖b1+ 27.♖d1 ♖xd1+ 28.♔xd1 ♖xf2–+.

22...♕c8

Black could have played 22...♖xd2 23.♔xd2 (23.♘xd2 ♕g5) 23...♘b6 with a decisive advantage in both lines.

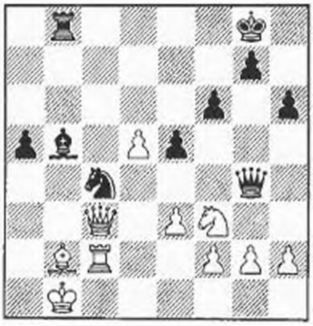
23.♕a3

23.dxe6 ♖xb2! 24.♖xb2 ♕c1+ 25.♕d1 ♕xb2 26.exd7 ♖d8–+.

23...♖xd2

Black can choose now between many winning lines – it is mostly a matter of style. Judit made no mistakes and Karpov did not get any chances to save the game.

24.♔xd2 ♘b6 25.♕c3 ♘c4+ 26.♔c2 e5 27.♔b1 ♕g4 28.♖c1 ♖b8 29.♖c2 f6



Finally White managed to develop his rook but his position remained totally hopeless.

30.d6 ♕xg2 31.♘d2 ♕h1+ 32.♔a2 ♘xd6 33.♕c5 ♖c8 0–1

25 C54

Kramnik – Krasenkow

Round 4 15.01

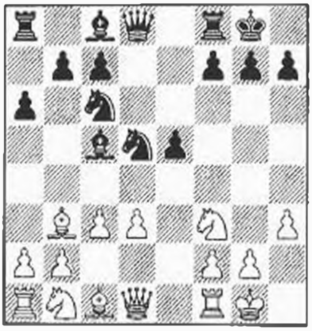
Notes by D. Yevseev

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗c4 ♗c5 4.c3 ♘f6 5.d3 a6 6.♗b3 0–0 7.0–0 d5?!

Black has problems now with the defence of his e5-pawn. After 7...d6 White counters with the annoying 8.♗g5, and if 7...h6 – 8.d4. The correct move for Black is 7...♗a7!, prudently escaping with the bishop the eventual attack with tempo after d3-d4, and planning to counter 8.♗g5 with 8...h6 9.♗h4 g5!, and if 10.♘xg5?! hxg5 11.♗xg5, then 11...♗c5! followed by 12...♗e7, eliminating the unpleasant pin. This was all played in the game Kayumov – Vajda, Budapest 2003. There followed: 12.♕f3 ♗e7 13.♗h6 d6 14.♕g3 ♘g4 15.♗xf8 (15.h3?? ♗h4–+) 15...♔xf8 and Black was not worse.

8.exd5 ♘xd5 9.h3

After 9.♘xe5 ♗xf2+! 10.♖xf2 ♘xe5 11.♕h5 ♘xd3 the position remains unclear, Lakos – Jaracz, Zanka 1995.



9...♘b6

This prophylactic is necessary. The lines 9...h6 10.♘xe5! (White can also play 10.♖e1!? ♖e8?! 11.d4!; 10...♘b6) 10...♘xe5 11.d4 illustrate the necessity of Black's last move.

10.♖e1 h6

Black is still defending that pawn tactically. It was not so good for him to play 10...♖e8? 11.♘g5, as well as 10...♗f5? 11.♘xe5.

11.♘bd2!

This move leads to the exchange of the vulnerable black pawn on e5; nevertheless White maintains a clear advantage after it. In case of 11.♘xe5 Black counters with 11...♗xf2+! (but not 11...♘xe5? and if 12.♖xe5? ♗xf2+!;

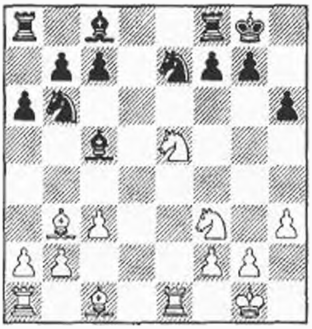
White should play instead 12.d4!±) 12.♔xf2 ♘xe5⇄ with mutual chances.

11...♕xd3 12.♘xe5 ♕g3

This was Black's best decision. After 12...♘xe5?! 13.♖xe5 Black has serious problems to solve, because 13...♗d6? is very bad for Black (White is much better too after 13...♕d6 14.♕h5 g6 15.♕e2±) 14.♗c2± and the black queen gets trapped. White has a stable advantage after 12...♕f5 13.♘df3±, for example 13...♕f6 14.♘xc6 ♕xc6 15.♕d3! with the unpleasant threat 16.♗c2.

13.♕f3 ♕xf3 14.♘dxf3 ♘e7?

The correct line for Black was 14...♘xe5 15.♘xe5 ♗d6 (Black loses a pawn after 15...♗e6?! 16.♗xe6 fxe6 17.♘d3±) and Black is a little worse indeed, but his position is defendable. There might follow 16.♘g6 ♖d8 17.♘e7+ ♔f8 18.♘xc8 ♖axc8 19.♗e3±.



15.♘d3?

Both opponents overlooked here a relatively simple combination: 15.♘xf7! ♖xf7 16.♖xe7! ♗xe7 17.♘e5± and White wins a pawn. This most probably happened because White was clearly better after calmer proceedings too.

15...♗d6 16.♗f4 ♘g6

Black's position was not to be envied after 16...♗xf4? 17.♘xf4, for example 17...♘c6 18.♘g6 ♖d8 19.♘e7+.

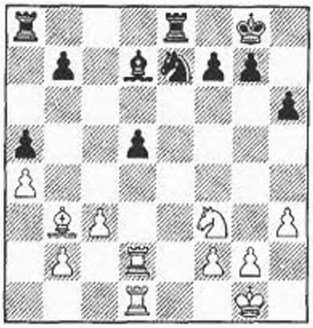
17.♗xd6 cxd6 18.♖e4!?

White is planning to attack the d6 pawn with the help of his rook on d4 and threatens also ♖b4 at an opportune moment. It was not bad at all to play the routine but strong 18.♖ad1±.

18...a5 19.♖d4 ♖d8 20.♖d1 d5 21.♘c5 ♘e7 22.a4 ♖e8 23.♖4d2 ♘d7!

Black manages to exchange his misplaced knight on b6 with the help of a tactical trick. His position remains difficult, though...

24.♘xd7 ♗xd7



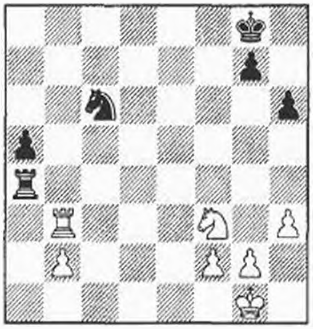
25.c4!?

Vladimir Kramnik makes up his mind to transform his advantage. He exchanges the weak pawn of his opponent but occupies the 7th rank with his rooks.

25...dxc4 26.♖xd7 cxb3 27.♖xb7 ♖ab8 28.♖dd7 ♘c6!

Michal Krasenkow defends really stubbornly his much inferior position and creates great problems for White to realize his advantage. He could not have avoided the loss of a pawn: 28...♖xb7 29.♖xb7 ♘g6 30.♖xb3 ♖e4 31.♖b8+ ♔h7 32.b3±. Black succeeds in reducing greatly the remaining pawns after the move in the game.

29.♖xf7 ♖xb7 30.♖xb7 ♖e4 31.♖xb3 ♖xa4



It is definitely not easy for White to win with an extra pawn in this position. There are quite a few pawns left on the board and White can hardly avoid in the long run the exchange of the last couple of pawns on the queenside.

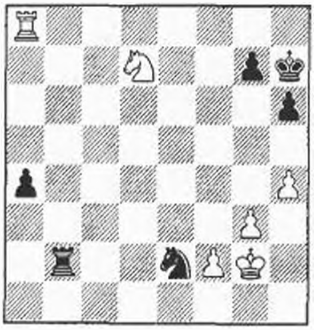
32.♖b6 ♖c4 33.g3 a4 34.h4 ♘d4 35.♘e5

The rook and pawn endgame will be an unavoidable draw.

35...♖c5 36.♖b8+ ♔h7 37.♘d7 ♖b5 38.♖a8 ♘e2+

38...♖xb2? 39.♘f8+ ♔g8 40.♘e6+−.

39.♔g2 ♖xb2



40.h5!

White could have captured the pawn immediately – 40.♖xa4, but it would be hardly possible to win that position with a pawn majority of "three against two" on the same side of the board. White is trying instead to weave a checkmating net.

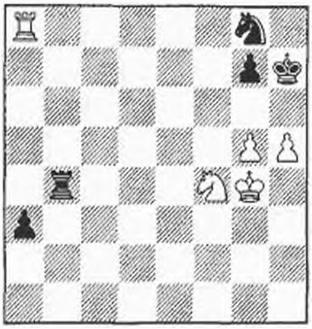
40...♘c3 41.♘e5 ♖b5 42.f4

White is threatening now 43.g4 followed by 44.♘g6.

42...♘e4 43.g4 ♘f6 44.♘g6 ♘g8 45.♘f8+ ♔h8 46.♘g6+ ♔h7 47.♔f3

White could have captured the pawn outright with 47.♖xa4, but he preferred to improve his position on the kingside having in mind that the enemy a-pawn is going nowhere.

47...♖b3+ 48.♔e4 a3 49.♘f8+ ♔h8 50.♘g6+ ♔h7 51.g5 hxg5 52.fxg5 ♖b4+ 53.♔f5 ♖b5+ 54.♔g4 ♖b4+ 55.♔f5 ♖b5+ 56.♔g4 ♖b4+ 57.♘f4



57...a2!?

This was definitely the right decision because Black would have lost that pawn anyway: 57...♖b3 58.g6+ ♔h8 59.♘d5 ♖b7, besides the presence of that pawn on the board was excluding some key stalemate-ideas for Black in some lines.

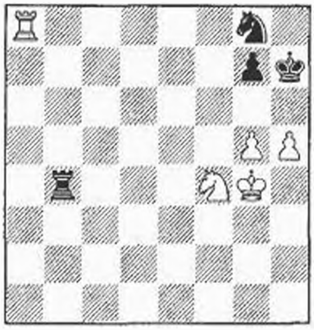
58.♖xa2 ♘e7?!

Black evidently overlooked White's

only possible idea to play for a win. White's rook must be on the 8th rank and at a moment in which the black knight is on g8 White plays g5-g6+. After ♔h8 White plays h5-h6 and after gxh6 he places the rook on the 7th rank. If you take into account the number of the moves played, most probably both opponents were in a time-trouble. Black's most precise way to draw that game was to play 58...♖e4! with the idea to take the e7-square under control and it was not quite clear then what White could do to improve his position, for example: 59.♖a8 ♖e1 60.g6+ ♔h8 61.h6 gxh6! 62.♖a7 ♘e7=

59.♖a8 ♘g8

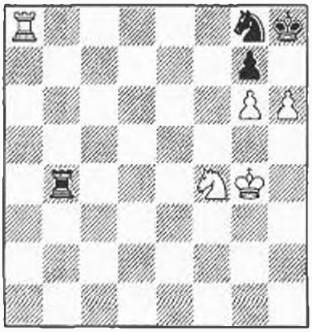
59...g6? 60.♖a7 gxh5+ (60...♖e4 61.♔f3 ♖e5 62.♘xg6 ♖xg5 63.♖xe7+ ♔h6 64.♘f4+–) 61.♔f3 ♖b3+ 62.♔f2 ♖b2+ 63.♔g3 ♖b3+ 64.♔h4 ♖e3 65.♘d5+–



60.♖a7

White evidently did not wish to change somehow the position with the last move of the time-control, however that was possibly the right time for him to play the idea that I mentioned – 60.g6+!?. If Black plays 60...♔h6?, there arises a really amusing position 61.♖xg8 ♖b8!. The white rook looks trapped, does not it? (after 61...♖xf4+ 62.♔xf4+– there is no stalemate) 62.♘d3!! ♖b4+ (62...♖xg8 63.♘e5+–) 63.♔f5 ♖b5+ 64.♘e5+–

After the correct move 60...♔h8 White plays 61.h6 and Black must find an only line that saves the game:



1) Black now loses after 61...♖b7 62.h7 (there are no checks!) 62...♖b8 63.hxg8♕+ ♖xg8 and now the simplest line for White is 64.♖xg8+ ♔xg8+– and later White wins by bringing his king to e7 or e8 and playing ♘f6 or ♘h6, when the black king is on h8;

2) It looks like the other moves for Black should lose too: 61...gxh6 62.♖a7 h5+ (62...♘f6+ 63.♔f5 ♖b6 64.♖f7+–) 63.♔g5 ♖b5+ (63...♘f6 64.♖f7 ♘e4+ 65.♔h6 ♖b8 66.♘d5+–) 64.♔h4 ♘f6 (64...♘h6 65.♖h7+–) 65.♖f7 ♖b6 66.♔g5 ♘g4 67.♖f8+! ♔g7 68.♖f5! ♔g8 (68...♘f6 69.♖xf6!+–) 69.♘xh5 ♘h2 (69...♘e3 70.♖e5+–) 70.♖a5 ♖b8 71.♘f6+ ♔f8 72.♖a7 ♖b5+ 73.♔h6+–;

3) 61...♖b1 62.♖f8! (Δ63.hxg7+ ♔xg7 64.♖f7+ ♔h8 65.♖h7#; 62.hxg7+ ♔xg7 63.♖a7+ ♔f6 64.♖f7+ ♔e5=; 62.h7 ♖g1+ 63.♔f5 ♖g5=) 62...♖h1 (62...gxh6 63.♖f7+–; 62...♖g1+ 63.♔f5 ♖h1 64.hxg7+ ♔xg7 65.♖f7+ ♔h8 66.♔g5+– – see 62...♖h1) 63.hxg7+ ♔xg7 64.♖f7+ ♔h8 65.♔g5 ♖h2 (65...♖g1+ 66.♔h4

♖h1+ 67.♘h3 ♘f6 68.♖xf6 ♔g7 69.♖e6 ♔h6 70.♔g4+−; 67...♘h6 68.♖h7+ ♔g8 69.♖xh6 ♔g7 70.♔g5+−) 66.♖c7!. Black is now in zugzwang! 66...♖h1 – this is the only move (66...♖h6 67.♘h5+−), and now White wins by bringing his knight to h4: 67.♘g2! ♖h3 68.♘h4 ♘h6 (68...♖g3+ 69.♔f4+−) 69.♖h7+ ♔g8 70.♖xh6+−;

4) 61...♖e4!. This is Black's only playable defence – it is still not too late to take the e7-square under control. 62.♖f8 (After 62.♔f5 ♖e1 it is not clear how White improves his position.) 62...gxh6! 63.♖f7 ♘e7= – this is the idea of the move 61...♖e4.

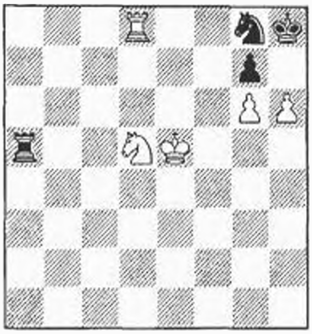
60...♔h8

60...♖e4! 61.♔f5 ♖e7.

61.♖a8 ♔h7 62.♖f8

62.g6+!? ♔h8 63.h6.

62...♔h8 63.♔f3 ♖b3+ 64.♔e4 ♖b4+ 65.♔e5 ♖b5+ 66.♘d5 ♖a5 67.♖d8 ♔h7 68.g6+!? ♔h8 69.h6!



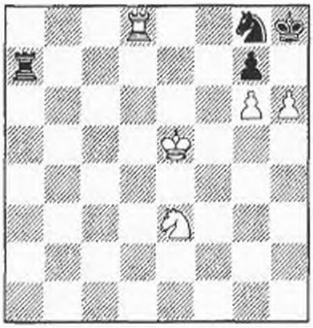
Vladimir Kramnik prepared the same idea after a bit different execution, but White cannot win here either.

69...♖a7!!

This is a brilliant reply! In answer to 70.h7 Black's rook was becoming "wild"! He was losing after 69...gxh6? 70.♖d7 ♖xd5+ 71.♖xd5 ♔g7 72.♖d6+−

70.♘e3!?

This was White's last chance. 70.h7 ♖e7= 71.♔d6 ♖e6+ 72.♔c5 ♖c6+ etc.



70...gxh6?

Black blunders being just a step away from the draw, which was not so difficult to reach after: 70...♖e7+ 71.♔f4 ♖e6! 72.hxg7+ (72.h7 ♖e4=) 72...♔xg7 73.♘f5+ ♔xg6 (73...♔h8 74.♖d1 ♖xg6 75.♖h1+ ♘h6 76.♘xh6 ♔g7 77.♘f5+ ♔f7=) 74.♖xg8+ ♔f7=.

71.♘f5+−

White wins easily now: he places the rook on f7 and the white king avoids the checks on h5.

71...♖a5+

71...h5!? 72.♔f4 (72.♖f8? ♖a5+ 73.♔f4 ♖a4+ 74.♔f3 ♖a6! 75.♘e7 ♖f6=; 74.♔e3 ♖a6!= 75.♘e7? ♖e6+; 74.♔g5 ♖g4+ 75.♔xh5 ♖xg6!=; 75...♖g5+!=) 72...♖a4+ 73.♔f3 ♖a3+ 74.♔g2 ♖a2+ 75.♔h3 ♖a3+ 76.♔h4 ♖a4+ 77.♔xh5 ♖a5 78.♖f8+−.

72.♔f4 ♖a4+ 73.♔f3 ♖a3+ 74.♔g4 ♖a4+ 75.♔h5 ♖a7

75...♖a5 76.♖f8 (Δ♖f7-h7) 76...♖a6 77.♘e7+−.

76.♖f8 ♖b7 77.♔h4?!

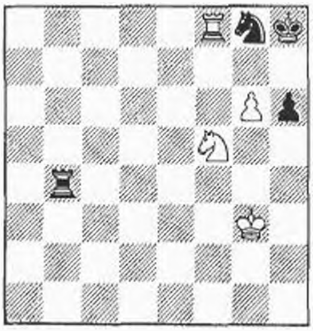
White here overlooks an immediate win, but fortunately for him it is still not running away and he can play the winning line later – 77.♖f7! ♖xf7 78.gxf7 ♘f6+ 79.♔g6! ♘h7 80.♔xh6 ♘f8 81.♘h4 ♘e6 82.♘g6#.

77...♖b4+

77...♖g7 78.♔h5 ♖a7 79.♖f7+–.

78.♔g3?!

This is already a bit strange. Most probably the opponents were really tired, hence the strange events happening on the board. 78.♔h5+– was of course winning as before.



78...♖b6?!

This was essentially a blunder. It was logical for Black to continue with the checks, but probably he had seen by then the win for White that we had already shown: 78...♖b3+ 79.♔g4 ♖b4+ 80.♔h5 ♖b2 (80...♖b7 81.♖f7+–) 81.♖f7 ♖h2+ 82.♘h4+–

79.♘e7 ♔g7 80.♖f7+ 1–0

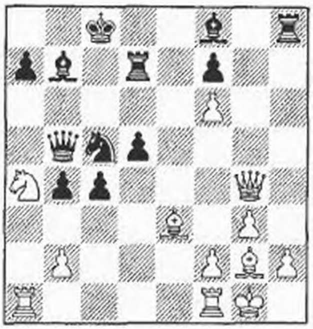
26 **D44**

Ponomariov – Shirov
Round 4 15.01
Notes by M. Golubev

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.♘c3 e6 5.♗g5 dxc4 6.e4 b5 7.e5 h6 8.♗h4 g5 9.♘xg5 hxg5 10.♗xg5 ♘bd7

The Botvinnik variation leads to double-edged and extremely non-balanced positions. It can be played successfully on a GM level only after a super thorough preparation. There is also a great risk involved because the opponent might turn out to be better prepared after all. It comes to mind how Kramnik lost once his challengers match for the world title against Kamsky, because of a disastrous outcome of an opening battle in the Botvinnik variation.

11.g3 ♗b7 12.♗g2 ♕b6 13.exf6 0–0–0 14.0–0 c5 15.d5 b4 16.♘a4 ♕b5 17.a3 exd5 18.axb4 cxb4 19.♗e3 ♘c5 20.♕g4 ♖d7



21.♕g7!?

This is it – Ivanchuk's famous and totally unclear sacrifice. The alternative was 21.♘xc5.

21...♗xg7 22.fxg7 ♖g8 23.♘xc5 ♖xg7

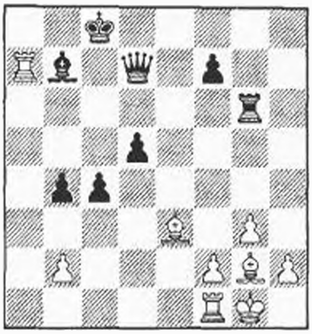
23...d4?! was played in the game that all this originated from: Ivanchuk – Shirov, Wijk aan Zee 1996. The commentators mentioned mostly 23...♖c7!? and 23...f5?! 24.♖xa7! among other moves.

24.♘xd7!?

This is a novelty. The possibility 24.♗d4 f5 does not look very promising for White (Lalic – Wilson, London 1996). White has no advantage either after 24.♖xa7 d4!? (Black can also play 24...♖c7) 25.♘xd7 (after 25.♗xb7 ♖xb7 26.♘xb7 ♕b6! according to Lalic, White has to fight for a draw with 27.♖fa1!? dxe3 28.♖1a6) 25...♗xg2 26.♗xd4 ♗xf1 27.♘b6 ♔b8 28.♘d7 with a draw.

It is interesting for White to try 24.♗h3!? f5 25.♗xf5 ♖gf7 (the line 25...d4!? 26.♗xd4 ♖gf7, recommended by Ivanchuk seems to offer good prospects to White – he can play 27.♗h3!?, or 27.♗g4!? ♗f3 28.♗h3 ♖h7 29.♖xa7 ♖xh3 30.♖xd7) 26.♗xd7!? (or 26.♗h3 ♖h7, T.Ernst – Hermansson, Stockholm 2002, and White can capture on d7 immediately, or repeat the position with 27.♗f5) 26...♖xd7 27.♖xa7! (27.♘xd7?! d4!) and...the position needs a thorough analysis!

24...♕xd7 25.♖xa7 ♖g6



26.♖fa1?!

Shirov evaluated this move as dubious in his comments for the Chess Informant. 26.♖d1 leads to a rather unclear position.

26...♖e6! 27.♗d4

Here Shirov recommends 27.♖7a5 ♖xe3 28.fxe3 ♕e6 29.♖e1 and Black is a little better.

27...♖e2!

The position is probably in favour of Black, objectively speaking. It is however complicated enough...

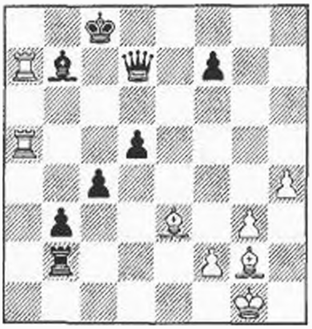
28.h4

White could have tried here 28.♖a8!? ♔c7 29.♖h8.

28...♖d2! 29.♗e3

White sacrifices a pawn in order to activate his pieces optimally. It was hardly stronger to play 29.♖a8 ♔c7 30.♗e5 ♔b6 31.♖8a4 ♕e7!?.

29...♖xb2 30.♖1a5 b3!



31.♖c5?!

It was worth for Ponomariov to try 31.♔h2, or maybe even 31.h5.

31...♔d8!

This was the right choice. After 31...♔b8 32.♖a3! ♗c6 33.♖a6, Black seemingly fails to promote his pawns after some long and complex lines like: 33...♔b7 34.♖axc6 ♕xc6 35.♗xd5 ♕xd5 36.♖xd5 ♖b1 37.♔h2 b2 38.♖b5 ♔a6 39.♖b6 ♔a5 40.♗d4 c3 41.♖b8 c2 42.♗xb2 ♖xb2 43.♖c8.

32.♖xb7?!

Unfortunately for White, the arising endgame turns out to be lost for him. It was equally hopeless to play 32.♗xd5? ♕xd5 33.♖xd5 ♗xd5, but maybe it was worth trying 32.h5.

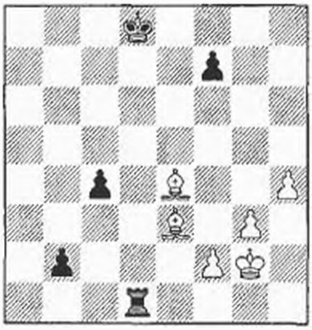
32...♕xb7 33.♖xd5 ♕xd5 34.♗xd5 ♖b1 35.♔g2 b2!

After 35...c3?! 36.♗xf7! White was going to give up both his bishops for the black pawns and then push forward his kingside pawns.

36.♗e4

White was losing immediately after 36.♗xc4 ♖d1!! 37.♗a2 ♖a1!, or 36.♗d4 ♖g1.

36...♖d1!



37.♗g5

Black was threatening 37...♖d3! interposing between the bishop and the pawn and promoting immediately.

37...♔e8

37...♔d7!? was also possible.

38.♗f6 b1♕ 39.♗xb1 ♖xb1 40.h5

The white king cannot approach the black pawn: 40.♔f3 c3! −+.

40...♔f8 41.g4 ♖d1 42.♗b2

The main line illustrating the method of Black's win was 42.g5 ♖d3! 43.f4 c3 44.h6 ♔g8 45.f5 ♔h7. 42.♗c3 was maybe the most stubborn move, but it is hardly believable that White could have saved the game after 42...♔g8.

42...♔g8 0–1

Black's c4–pawn is unstoppable and White loses his bishop in a few moves.

27 D55

Timman – Anand

Round 4 15.01

The variation of the Queen's Gambit Deferred that was played in this game became popular after the world-championship match between Kasparov and Karpov back in 1985. The tournament practice proved that Black can neutralize reliably White's initiative and the line gradually went out of fashion. The opponents in this game made a draw without having made a single move of their own...

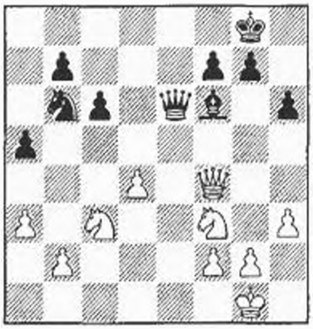
1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗e7 4.♘f3 ♘f6 5.♗g5 h6 6.♗xf6 ♗xf6 7.e3 0–0 8.♖c1 c6 9.♗d3 ♘d7 10.0–0 dxc4 11.♗xc4 e5 12.h3

The other moves here 12.♘e4 and 12.♗b3 are played even more rarely.

12...exd4 13.exd4 ♘b6 14.♗b3 ♖e8

14...♗f5 would have only led to a transposition of moves: 15.♖e1 ♖e8.

15.♖e1 ♗f5 16.♖xe8+ ♕xe8 17.♕d2 ♕d7 18.♖e1 a5 19.a3 ♖e8 20.♖xe8+ ♕xe8 21.♕f4 ♗e6 22.♗xe6 ♕xe6



Timman has already had that position in his practice. A whole 15 years ago he played 23.♕c7, but his opponent found an interesting piece-sacrifice that led to a draw: 23...♘c4 24.♕b8+ ♔h7 25.♕xb7 ♗xd4 26.♘xd4 ♕e1+ 27.♔h2 ♘d2 28.♕xf7 Timman – Jussupow, Linares 1988

23.♕b8+ ½ – ½

The game could have continued, for example with: 23...♕c8 24.♕a7 (24.♕xc8+ ♘xc8=) 24...♘c4 25.b3 ♘xa3 26.♕xa5 ♗e7 27.♕e5 ♕d8 28.♕f5 ♗b4 29.♘e4 ♘b5 30.♘e5 ♕d5 31.♕c8+ ♔h7 32.♕f5+ ♔g8 33.♕c8+ and a draw by a perpetual, M.Gurevich – Van Der Sterren, Baku 1986.

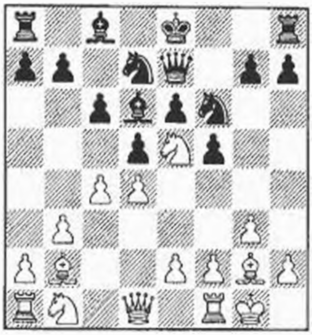
28 **A90**

Van Wely – Radjabov

Round 4 15.01

Notes by V. Beim

1.d4 e6 2.c4 f5 3.g3 ♘f6 4.♗g2 d5 5.♘f3 c6 6.0–0 ♗d6 7.b3 ♕e7 8.♘e5 ♘bd7 9.♗b2



9...♘e4!?

This is an interesting novelty. The idea is that after the usual 9...0–0 10.♘d2 ♘e4 the white knight can support his colleague after 11.♘df3. Black prevents that possibility with the move in the text.

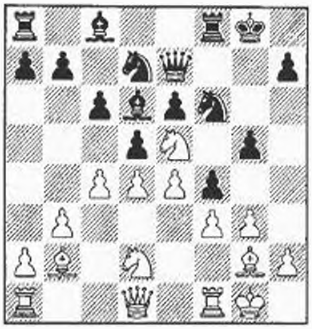
10.f3 ♘ef6 11.e3

It is not easy to understand that move. Its explanation might be in the line; 11.♘d2 ♘xe5 12.dxe5 ♗c5+ 13.♔h1 ♘d7 and in answer to 14.e4 Black has the typical Dutch resource 14...f4. After 15.gxf4 ♗e3 Black has a good game. White can try instead 11.♔h1!? and in case of a development like in our game: 11...0–0 12.♘d2 g5 (it is probably better for Black to play here 12...c5!?) 13.e4 White wins an important tempo in comparison to the game.

11...0–0 12.♘d2 g5!?

It deserved attention again for Black to try 12...c5!?, but Radjabov sticks to the more popular plan for the Dutch set-ups, advancing his f and g-pawns.

13.e4 f4



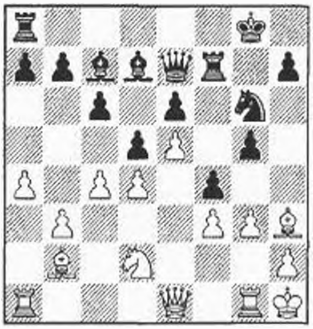
14.♘xd7?!

Van Wely plays in his typical active manner and avoids wasting time in favour of acquiring space. I believe that he pays too dear a price for that however. The point is that he exchanges his strongest piece for the moment and his other knight remains on the board quite clumsy and not controlling any important strategical squares. What were the alternatives? After 14.gxf4 Black has the typical resource for similar positions: 14...♘h5!?; I like the move: 14.♘d3!?, preserving the control over all important key-squares. Then after a) 14...fxg3 15.e5 gxh2+ 16.♔h1 ♘h5 17.exd6 ♘g3+ 18.♔xh2 ♘xf1+ 19.♗xf1! ♕xd6+ 20.f4!? (this move was suggested by „Fritz") 20...gxf4 21.♕f3 White has a clear advantage; and b) 14...♘h5 15.g4 ♘g7 the moves 16.♖e1!? as well as 16.a4!? preserve better chances for White; and the most principled move c) 14...e5?! turns out to be after 15.gxf4 gxf4 16.exd5 definitely in favour of White.

14...♘xd7 15.♕e1 ♖f7!

Radjabov finds a simple and effective way of redeploying his forces.

16.♗h3 ♘f8! 17.♔h1 ♘g6 18.e5 ♗c7 19.♖g1 ♗d7 20.a4



We can now summarize this rather prolonged opening stage of the game like that: White has a space advantage, but he has more weaknesses and in case he fails to find an active plan, the drawbacks of his position might tell in the end.

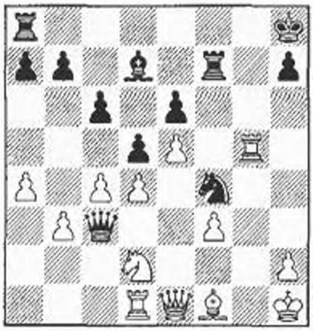
20...♗a5!

This is much better than 20...fxg3?! 21.hxg3 ♗a5 22.♗a3 ♗b4 23.♗xb4 ♕xb4 24.♕e3 h6 25.f4! and White remains with a clear advantage.

21.♗a3 ♗b4 22.♗xb4 ♕xb4 23.gxf4 ♘xf4!

This is better than 23...♕c3?! 24.cxd5 cxd5 25.f5 exf5 26.e6 ♗xe6 27.♕xe6 ♕xd2 28.♕xd5 with an edge for White. Black's pawn sacrifice in order to occupy the f4-square is so typical for the Dutch as well as the King's Indian defence.

24.♖xg5+ ♔h8 25.♗f1 ♕c3 26.♖d1



26...♖af8!

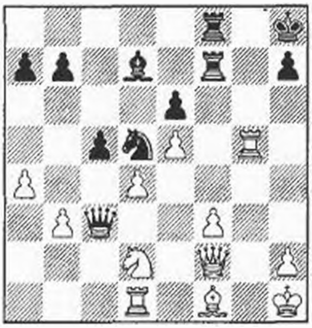
This is one more quite correct decision. Black's attempt to recapture material backfires after: 26...♕xd4?! 27.♘e4 ♕b2 28.♘d6 ♖g7 29.♖xg7 ♔xg7 30.♕g3+ ♘g6 31.f4 and White is better.

27.♕f2 c5!?

Black is in a hurry to introduce his last inactive piece. He could have tried a more restrained kind of action: 27...b6!?.

28.cxd5 ♘xd5

It was also interesting for Black to try the other recapture: 28...exd5!? 29.dxc5 ♖c8 and he would have a good position, but it was obvious that Radjabov had something else in mind.



29.♘e4?

As you know every imprecision in a sharp position might turn out to be decisive. This is the case here and I believe that to be the fatal mistake. It was better for White to play 29.dxc5 ♗c6 30.♗b5, in order to trade the dangerous black bishop.

29...♕xb3

That is the correct move. After 29...♖xf3? 30.♘xc3 ♖xf2 31.♘xd5 ♖xf1+ 32.♖xf1 ♖xf1+ 33.♔g2 ♖f8 34.♘f6 ♗c6+ 35.♔f2 cxd4 36.♔e2 White is clearly better.

30.♖d3 ♕b1!

It is possible that "King Loek" underestimated that particular move, relying only on 30...♕xa4?! 31.♘xc5 ♕b4 32.♖g3 and then the black bishop fails to occupy the long diagonal: 32...♗c6? 33.♖b3 ♕a5 34.♘xe6 ♖e8 35.♘g5 ♖g7 36.♘e4 and White's advantage in indisputable.

31.♘xc5 ♗c6 32.♖g3

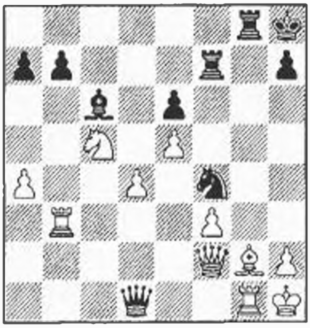
White is now in trouble all over the board. He loses after 32.♘xe6 ♘b4 33.♘xf8 ♘xd3 as well as after 32.♖b3 ♕xb3 33.♘xb3 ♖xf3.

32...♘f4 33.♖b3 ♕d1 34.♖g1 ♖g8!

This was another deadly strike, because the rook on g1 was too important for the defence.

35.♗g2

White has great difficulties after 35.♖xg8+ ♔xg8 36.♖c3 ♖g7 37.♘e4 ♘h3 too.



35...♘h3!?

Black has played brilliantly until now when he overlooked the possibility to finish the game off quickly with 35...♕e2! winning easily in all lines: 36.♖b2 (36.♘e4 ♕xf2 37.♘xf2 ♘xg2 38.♖xg2 ♗xf3 –+; 36.♕xe2 ♘xe2 37.♖f1 ♘f4 –+) 36...♕xf2 37.♖xf2 ♘xg2 38.♖gxg2 ♗xf3 39.♖xf3 ♖xf3 40.♖xg8+ ♔xg8 41.♘xe6 ♖d3.

36.♗xh3 ♖xf3 37.♖xf3 ♗xf3+ 38.♗g2 ♖xg2 39.♖xd1 ♖xf2+ 40.♔g1 ♖g2+ 41.♔f1 ♖xh2 42.♖d3 ♗d5 43.♖g3 ♖h6!?

The endgame that arose as a result was winning for Black. He has an extra pawn and a very powerful bishop, but he still has some technical difficulties to overcome.

44.♘d7 ♖g6 45.♖c3

The exchange of the rooks is hopeless for White in this position.

44...♗c6 46.♘f6 ♔g7 47.a5 a6 48.♔f2 ♖g2+ 49.♔f1 ♖g5

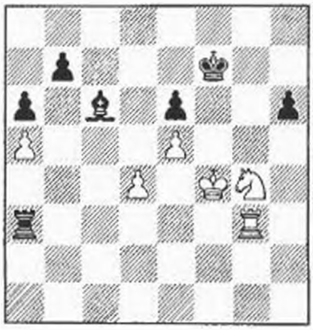
Black's win was much easier after 49...♖a2!? 50.♖g3+ ♔f7 51.♘xh7 ♖xa5 52.♘g5+ ♔e7 53.♖h3 ♖a1+ 54.♔e2

♖h1.

50.♔f2 h6 51.♖h3 ♖g2+ 52.♔e3 ♖a2 53.♖g3+ ♔f7 54.♘g4 ♖a3+?!

Black now settles on a totally wrong path. He had all chances to win after 54...♔g6!.

55.♔f4



55...♖xg3?

This exchange lets White off the hook irrevocably. Black still had winning chances after 55...♖xa5 56.♘xh6+ ♔e8.

56.♔xg3 ♔g6 57.♔f4 b6

Black cannot do anything decisive without that unblocking sacrifice. He fails to improve his position on the kingside: 57...h5 58.♘f6 ♔h6 59.♘g8+ ♔g7 60.♘f6 ♔g6 61.♘g8!

58.axb6 a5 59.♘e3 a4 60.♘c4 ♗d5

Black cannot achieve anything if he tries to come with his king from behind: 60...♔h5 61.♔e3 ♔g4 62.♔d2 ♔f4 (62...h5? 63.d5! exd5 64.e6 dxc4 65.e7 a3 66.♔c3+–) 63.♘a5 ♗d5 64.b7 ♗xb7 65.♘xb7 a3! 66.♔c3 a2 67.♔b2 ♔e4 68.♘c5+ ♔xd4 69.♘xe6+ ♔xe5 70.♘g7 with a draw. His attempts to do something later turn out to be futile too.

61.♔g4! h5+ 62.♔f4 ♗g2 63.♔g3 ♗a8 64.♔f4 ♗b7 65.♘a3 ♗g2 66.♔g3 ♗c6 67.♔f4 ♗a8 68.♘b5 ♗c6 69.♘a3 ♔f7 70.♔g5 ♔e7 71.♔xh5 ♔d7 72.♔g5 ♗d5 73.♔f4 ♔c6 74.♔e3 ♔xb6 75.♔d3 ♔a5 76.♔c3 ♗b3 77.♘b1 ♔b5 78.♘a3+ ♔c6 79.♔b4 ♔d5 80.♔c3 ♔c6 ½–½

29 **B12**

Anand – Karpov

Round 5 16.01

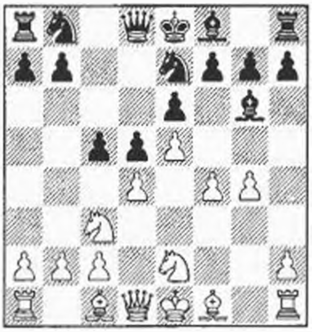
Notes by S. Shipov

The remarkable match in Losanne 1998 seems so distant in the past now. Vishy has seized the competitive initiative after that and takes his revenge regularly and methodically. Anatoly has great problems against Anand practically in every game since then...

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5

This is a sure way to complicate the fight.

3...♗f5 4.♘c3 e6 5.g4 ♗g6 6.♘ge2 ♘e7 7.f4 c5



8.♘g3

This is a novelty! White prepares the pawn-break f4-f5. It is really amazing that there are so many undeveloped lines in theory yet! White finds a quite logical and powerful resource as early as move eight (!!) in a super modern

line. He usually played before 8.dxc5 ♘ec6 9.♗e3 ♘a6 10.♘d4 ♘xc5 11.♗b5, Thipsay – Goldberg, Torquay 2002, or 8.h4 h5 9.f5 exf5 10.g5 ♘ec6 11.♗g2 cxd4 12.♘xd5, Topalov – Bareev, Dortmund 2002, with a very sharp fight in both cases.

8...cxd4 9.♘b5

Black is faced with a quite unpleasant dilemma – whether to allow the knight check on d6, or to part with the bishop on g6. Karpov chooses the latter and that is correct.

9...♘ec6 10.f5! ♗c5 11.♘d6+

White is trying to exchange one of the black bishops since the other has already been trapped. It was already futile for him to try to preserve his e5 pawn anyway.

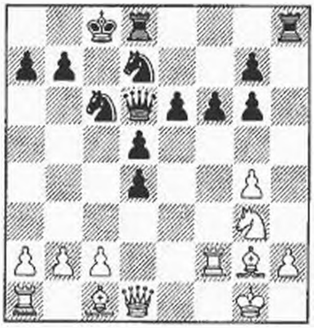
11...♗xd6 12.exd6 ♕xd6 13.♗g2 f6

It was probably worth for Black to play simpler with 13...♘d7 14.0–0 0–0 – with some counterchances.

14.fxg6 hxg6 15.0–0 ♘d7

Anatoly Evgenievich hopes to create later some threats against the white king just in case. He intends to evacuate his king on the queenside. He failed to organize any real attack, maybe because he did not have too many bishops left on the board...

16.♖f2 0–0–0

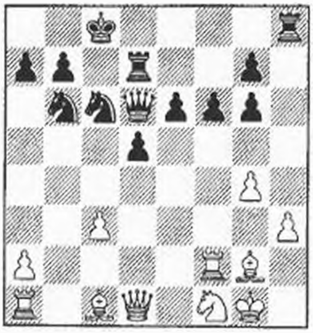


The position is very complex. Black has a powerful pawn formation in the centre. If he manages to push these central pawns forward without losing anything White might be in trouble.

17.c3!

This is a quite enlightened positional decision. White wants to open a couple of files which is understandable if you have in mind where the black king is.

17...dxc3 18.bxc3 ♘b6 19.♘f1 ♖d7 20.h3



20...f5

The pawn-tension concerning the f5-square turns out to be in favour of White. Black failed to find a satisfactory solution of that problem during the game. It was probably better for him to acquire some more space with 20...e5 21.♖b1 e4 and then to try to occupy the central squares with his knights.

21.♖b1 ♖f8 22.♕b3

White is threatening ♗c1–a3.

22...♖ff7 23.♕c2

The white queen is eyeing the f5-pawn.

23...♖c7

White can counter 23...♘c4 with the powerful 24.♘e3!

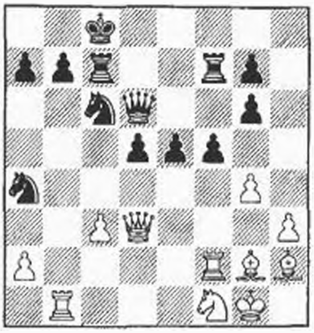
24.♕d3 ♘a4?

Black's knight is decentralized just for an instant and White makes use of that in a flash. Black here had an interesting chance to play 24...f4!? 25.♕xg6 f3! with the idea to follow 26.♗xf3? with 26...♘e5!. I believe that Vishy, whose manner of playing chess resembles a computer a lot, would have found the move 26.♗h1! easily, postponing the capturing of the f3 pawn for a while. Black's best instead probably was to continue manoeuvring with the rooks – 24...♖cd7.

25.♗f4!

This is a quite sensible provocation.

25...e5 26.♗h2



The black pawns on d5 and f5 are hanging and Black fails to hold his centre!

26...f4

The point is that the natural move 26...♘e7 is refuted with 27.♕b5 with a double attack against a4 and e8. Black will be forced then to play 27...♕c6, losing his e5 pawn.

27.♕xd5

This pawn tastes so good!

27...♕xd5 28.♗xd5 ♖fe7

Black's last chance is to do something on the queenside while White's bishop on h2 and knight on f1 are rather misplaced.

29.c4 ♘d4 30.♘d2 ♘c3 31.♖e1 b5!

This is the tactical motive of eliminating the defence.

32.♘e4!

White's knight is already free and the bishop on h2 is now on the agenda.

32...♘xe4 33.♖xe4 g5 34.cxb5 ♘xb5 35.♖e1 ♘c3 36.♗b3 a5

It seems now that Black has seized the initiative. The black pawn on e5 is about to come quickly to e3...

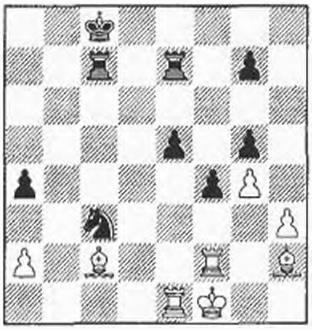
37.♔f1

The opponents were probably in a mutual time trouble, because the quality of the moves deteriorated drastically. It was much better for White to play 37.♗c2!

37...a4

Black had better play the immediate 37...e4! with good counterchances.

38.♗c2



38...♔b7

Now 38...e4 is not good anymore because of 39.h4 and after 39...e3 White manages to rearrange his pieces quite favourably with 40.♗f5+! ♔d8 41.♖b2. After 37...e4! White would not have had that resource at all.

39.♗f5

The bishop is very solidly placed here.

39...a3 40.♖c2 ♖c6 41.♗g1!

Finally White's last idle bishop joins the action and it becomes clear immediately that...he wins easily with his extra piece!

41...♖c4

White was threatening ♗g1-d4.

42.♗f2 e4 43.♖ec1 ♖ec7 44.♗e1! 1–0.

Vishy managed little by little to become quietly the leader of the tournament.

30 **C67**

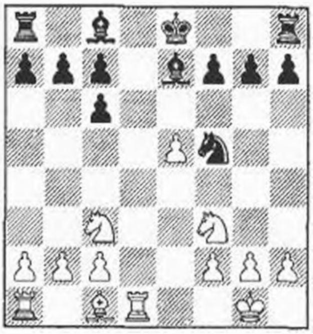
Grischuk – Ponomariov

Round 5 16.01

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 ♘f6 4. 0–0 ♘xe4 5.d4 ♘d6 6.♗xc6 dxc6 7. dxe5 ♘f5 8.♕xd8+ ♔xd8 9.♘c3 ♗e7

Black plays more often here 9...♔e8, 9...h6 or 9...♗d7 lately.

10.♖d1+ ♔e8



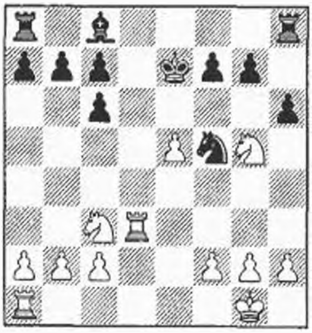
11.♗g5!?

White neutralizes Black's bishop pair advantage in this fashion, but lets the black king occupy the favourable e7-square.

11...♗xg5 12.♘xg5 ♔e7 13.♖d3

This is the correct decision. After the exchange of the heavy pieces the white pawn on e5 might become weak due to the centralization of the black king. White is trying to preserve his domination along the open d-file while his king gets centralized too. Later, in the game Hracek – Marcelin Germany 2003, White played 13.h3 h6 14.♘f3 h5 15.♘e2 ♗e6 16.♘f4 h4 17.♘xe6 ♔xe6 18.♖d3 ♖ad8 19.♖ad1 ♖xd3 20.♖xd3 c5 21.♔f1 b6 22.♔e1 ♖h5⇄ and had some problems with the defence of his e5-pawn, because of Black's threat ♘e7-c6.

13...h6



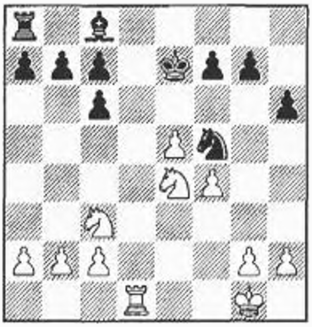
14.♘ge4

The white knight is placed beautifully on e4, but most probably the other retreat 14.♘f3!? is more troublesome for Black. The point is that Black cannot exchange a pair of rooks in that case, because after 14...♖d8? White plays 15.g4+– and wins a piece. Ponomariov said in his comments that after 14...g5 15.♖ad1 ♗e6 (it is also possible for Black to try 15...g4 16.♘d2 ♗e6 17.♘de4 ♖ad8) 16.♘e4 with the help of 16...♖ad8 17.♖xd8 ♖xd8 18. ♖xd8 ♔xd8 19.♘c5 ♗c8= Black can equalize. He can also try the line: 16...♗d5!? 17.♘f6 ♗xf3 18.♖xf3 ♖ad8 (it is too risky for Black to attack the e5-pawn immediately with 18...♔e6?! because of 19.♘d7 ♖ad8 20.♘c5+ ♔e7 21.♖fd3 ♖xd3 22.♖xd3±) 19.♖fd3 ♖xd3 20.♖xd3 ♔e6 with the idea to try to seize the initiative. It is relatively easy to notice that the move 14...g5 has some serious drawbacks too. In the game Korneev – Marcelin, Istanbul 2003, that was played in the European championship, after 15.h3 ♖d8 16.♖xd8 ♔xd8 17.♖d1+ ♔e7 18.g4 ♘g7 19.♔g2 ♗d7 20.♔g3± White managed to gradually emphasize the negative aspects of the move g7-g5. Another important indirect confirmation of the fact that 14...g5 is not a bed of roses for Black is the game Anand – Ponomariov, Linares 2003, in which the Ukrainian grandmaster preferred 14...g6.

14...♖d8 15.♖xd8 ♔xd8 16.♖d1+ ♔e7 17.f4

White defended his e5 pawn reliably, but the development of the game showed that Black can equalize easily. It is possible that White had better chances to get some edge after 17.b3 b6 18.f4 ♗b7 19.♔f2 c5 20.g4 ♘d4 21.♖d2± (with the idea to follow with ♘g3, ♘ce4 and c3) as in the game Dervishi – Gorbatov, Cutro 2000. Black was not out of the woods after 17.h3 ♘h4 18.f4 ♘g6 19.♖f1 ♗f5 20.g4 ♗xe4 21.♘xe4 ♖d8 22.♔g2 ♖d4 23.♔f3 ♘h4+ 24.♔e3±, which was played in the game Palac – Fontaine, Cap d'Agde 2003.

(diagram)



17...♘e3!

If White manages to play ♔f2 he will have a slight but stable advantage, because of his pawn majority on the kingside.

18.♖d2 ♗f5

Black is threatening to play 19...♖d8 in order to eliminate the defender of the c2-pawn.

19.♘g3 ♗h7

It was a blunder to capture the pawn 19...♗xc2?? because of 20.♖e2+-.

20.♔f2 ♘g4+

After 20...♘xc2 21.f5 ♘b4 22.a3 ♘a6 23.♘ce4↑ Black's light pieces would be forced to occupy extremely uncomfortable squares.

21.♔g1 ♘e3 22.♔f2 ♘c4

The FIDE world-champion could have made a draw with the move 22...♘g4=, but he preferred to continue playing for a win.

23.♖d4 b5 24.b3 ♘a3 25.♘ce4

White must fight for a draw now. It was better to play 25.f5!?, but Black has a good game after careful defence too. According to Ponomariov's analysis it is dangerous for Black to capture the pawn – 25...♘xc2?! because of 26.♖d2 ♘a3 (after 26...♘b4 27.a3 ♘a6 28.♘ce4 the black knight on a6 will be out of play for a long time) 27.♘ce2∞ and White preserves a dangerous pressure against Black's position, since 27...♖d8? does not work due to 28.♘d4

♔e8 29.♘h5±. The best line for Black is 25...♖d8! 26.f6+ gxf6 27.exf6+ ♔e8 28.♖h4 ♖d2+ 29.♘ce2 ♖xc2 30.♖xh6 ♗d3∞ and the position is with mutual chances.

25...♘xc2 26.♖d2 ♗xe4!

This exchange is quite timely, because after 26...♘b4?! 27.♘c5 ♖d8 28.♖xd8 ♔xd8 29.♘h5↑ White has the initiative.

27.♘xe4 ♘b4 28.a3

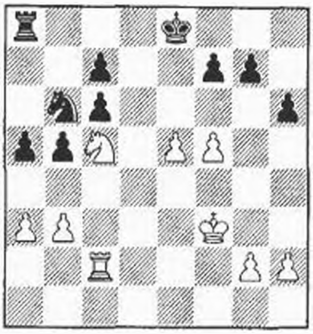
In case of 28.♘c5, Black can play 28...♖d8 and simplify the position additionally.

28...♘d5 29.♔f3 a5 30.♖c2 ♔d7

It is too complicated for Black to materialize his extra doubled pawn. The passive move 30...♖a6, after 31.♘c5 ♖b6 32.f5, enables White to organize some counterplay in the centre and on the kingside.

31.♘c5+ ♔e8 32.f5 ♘b6

Black intends to play 33...a4.



33.e6!=

Alexander Grischuk is making use of his pawn majority on the kingside.

33...a4 34.bxa4 ♘xa4 35.exf7+ ♔xf7 36.♘e6 ♘b6 37.♖xc6 ♖xa3+ 38.♔e2

White could have played also: 38.♔e4 ♖a4+ 39.♔f3 ♖c4 40.♖xc7+ ♖xc7 41.♘xc7 b4 42.♔e4 b3 43.♔d3 ♘c4 44.♘d5= (Ponomariov).

38...♘d5 39.♘xc7 ♘f4+ 40.♔f2 b4 41.♖c4 ♖a2+ 42.♔f3 ♘d3

After 42...♘xg2 43.♖xb4 ♔f6 44.♘e8= the position would remain equal as well.

43.♔e3 ♘e1

Black cannot achieve much either with 43...♘e5 due to 44.♖xb4 ♖xg2 45.♘d5 ♖xh2 46.♖b7=.

44.♘d5 ♘xg2+ 45.♔e4 b3 46.♖c7+ ♔g8 47.♖c8+ ♔h7 48.♖c7

White is threatening 49.♘f6+ and 50.♖c8# and that forces Black to comply with the repetition of the position.

48...♔g8 ½ – ½

31 **D10**

Krasenkow – Bareev

Round 5 16.01

Notes by S. Shipov

This was a fighting game and Evgeny was a bit lucky. He did not play the opening in the best possible way and he could have paid a dear price for that...

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.e3

You can name that variation – the anti-Slav.

4...a6

After 4...e6 5.♘f3 ♘bd7 White can choose between the Meran and the anti-Meran i.e. 6.♗d3 or 6.♕c2. In case of 4...♗f5 White has the powerful countermeasure – 5.cxd5 cxd5 6.♕b3!

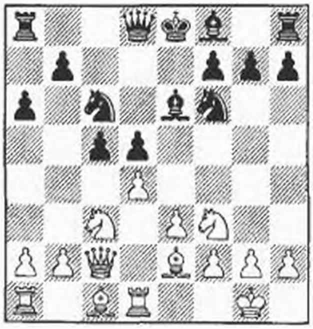
5.♕c2 e6 6.♘f3 c5!?

Following a couple of clever moves the game transposed into a line of the Tarrasch Defence.

7.cxd5

White plays here more often 7.a3 and after 7...dxc4 8.♗xc4 b5 the arising position belongs to... the Queen's Gambit Accepted! The contemporary opening transpositions are just endless...

7...exd5 8.♗e2 ♘c6 9.0–0 ♗e6 10.♖d1



White avoids exchanging on c5 waiting for the bishop on f8 to move. This is a typical tempo-fight.

10...cxd4

Just witness what kind of chess hooliganism happened in a game between two British players. They are probably not soccer fanatics, nevertheless they are known to be real fighters – 10...♘b4 11.♕d2 ♘e4 12.♘xe4 dxe4 13.a3 exf3 14.♗xf3 ♘c6 15.d5 ♘e5 16.dxe6 ♘xf3+ 17.gxf3 fxe6 18.b3 ♕xd2 19.♗xd2 and all that ended in a draw in an equal endgame some 30 moves later, Sadler – Hodgson, Hastings 1995/96.

11.♘xd4 ♖c8?!

This novelty is oriented towards a real fight but it is hardly going to attract many followers. Black managed to equalize easily more than 50 year ago with 11...♘xd4 12.exd4 ♗e7 13.♗g5 0–0 14.♗f3 b5 15.♕b3 ♕d6 – draw, Horowitz – Euwe, New York 1948. Evgeny was probably afraid that White might capture on d4 with the rook but I think Black should objectively be okay after that too.

12.♘xe6

This is the right reaction, of course!

12...fxe6 13.e4!

White exploits that energetic pawn break in the centre in order to complete his development and emphasize the weakness of the light squares in Black's camp.

13...d4 14.♕b3! ♕d7 15.♘a4 ♘a5!

Both competitors are playing very inventively.

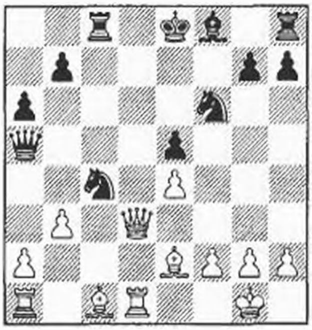
16.♕b6 ♘c4?!

It was obviously much more reliable for Black to play now 16...♘c6 planning to complete development with 17...♗e7, and that would have been a silent draw offer – 17.♕b3 ♘a5 18.♕b6 ♘c6 etc. Black was probably oriented towards a fight to the end before the game, so...:

17.♕xd4! ♕xa4 18.b3

White is recapturing, or much rather he is planning to regain his piece.

18...e5 19.♕d3 ♕a5



This is the key position of the game! Misha thought here for a long time and... missed a remarkable chance.

20.bxc4

No, he was probably afraid to risk. It was much stronger for White to play 20.♗h5+! g6 (20...♘xh5? 21.♕d7#) 21.♗g5 (after 21.♕h3 ♘b6 22.♗xg6+ hxg6 23.♕xh8 ♘bd7 Black has two pieces for a rook and a couple of pawns. His position is probably bad, but he has some practical chances) 21...♘b2 (It is even worse for Black to play 21...♔f7 22.♗xf6 ♔xf6 23.♕f3+ ♔e7 24.♗g4! and despite the opposite-coloured bishops Black will have to defend with a pawn down and under an attack, since 24...♘b6 25.b4! ♕xb4 26.♗xc8 ♘xc8 27.♖ab1 is a disaster for him.) 22.♕h3 ♜c6 23.♗xf6 (White can also play 23.♖dc1!? with a powerful initiative) 23...♘xd1 24.♖xd1 (24.♗xh8? ♕e1#) 24...♜d6! 25.g3 ♖xd1+ 26.♗xd1 ♕e1+ and now White has two about equally strong lines with a stable advantage – 27.♔g2 ♗c5 28.♕c8+ ♔f7 29.♕xc5 ♔xf6 30.♕b6+ ♔g7 31.♕xb7+ ♔h6 32.♗f3, or 27.♕f1 ♕xf1+ 28.♔xf1 ♖g8 29.♗xe5. White preserves excellent winning chances in both cases and you must also take into account the fact that Bareev must also find all these lines in order to try to survive! Would he be able to do that remains unclear and there would have been plenty of possibilities for him to perish quite swiftly on the road...

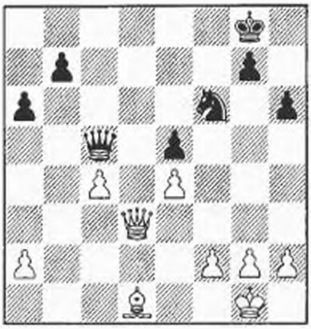
20...♗c5 21.♗e3 0–0 22.♗xc5 ♕xc5

The position has consolidated more or less. Black has good compensation for the pawn, since White's bishop seems to be really bad. Black managed to draw without too many problems later.

23.♖ab1 ♖c7 24.♖b3 ♖d7 25.♕e3 ♜xd1+ 26.♗xd1 ♜d8! 27.♖d3

White could have tried to win only after the retreat of the bishop – 27.♗f3. Nevertheless the position would have remained almost equal after 27...♕xe3 28.fxe3 ♖d7 etc.

27...♜xd3 28.♕xd3 h6



White's winning chances without rooks are close to nil.

29.♔f1 ♔f7 30.h4 ♔e7 31.♗b3 g5 32.♔e2 b6

Meanwhile I think Black here could have tried for more than a draw with – 32...gxh4!?.

33.g3 a5 34.♕e3 ♕xe3+ 35.♔xe3 ½ – ½

32 **B28**

Ju.Polgar – Ivanchuk

Round 5 16.01

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 a6 3.c4 e6 4.♘c3 ♘f6 5.♗e2 ♘c6 6.d4 cxd4 7.♘xd4 ♕c7 8.0–0 ♘xd4

White preserves some edge even after the more popular move 8...♗b4, for example: 9.♘xc6 dxc6 10.♕d3 0–0 11.♖d1 e5 12.♗g5± Becerra Rivero – Nakamura, New York 2003.

9.♕xd4 ♗c5 10.♕d3 b6

This is a new plan. Black usually played until now 10...0–0 and later the game might proceed like that: 11.♗g5 d6 12.♗xf6 gxf6 13.♔h1 ♔h8 14.f4 ♗d7 15.f5± Rublevsky – Taimanov, St Petersburg 2001.

11.a3 ♗b7 12.b4 ♗e7 13.♗e3 0–0 14.♖ac1 d6 15.♖fd1 ♖ab8 16.♗f4 ♖fd8 17.♕e3 ♖bc8 18.h3 ½ – ½

White's position is a bit preferable thanks to the extra space.

33 **E15**

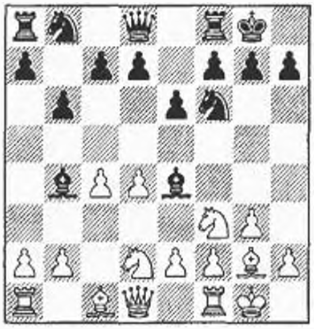
Radjabov – Timman

Round 5 16.01

Notes by S. Shipov

Finally "outrageous fortune" smiled at the youngest participant in the tournament. It was so cruel to him before...!

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 b6 4.g3 ♗a6 5.♘bd2 ♗b4 6.♕c2 ♗b7 7.♗g2 ♗e4 8.♕d1 0–0 9.0–0



The e4-square is the object of the strategical intrigue in this quiet line of the Queen's Indian Defence.

9...♗xd2 10.♕xd2 d6 11.b3 ♘bd7 12.♗b2 ♕e7

Black places his pawns on c6 and d5 quite often in positions of this type and then the bishop remains necessarily in front.

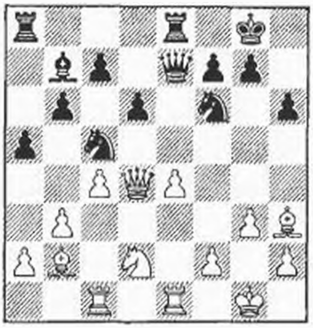
13.♖ac1

This is a novelty. White failed to obtain any advantage in the game Buhr – Gustafsson, Hamburg 1999, after 13.♖fe1 ♖fd8 14.♖ad1 a5 15.♕c3 c5 16.♘h4 ♗xg2 17.♘xg2, but surprisingly Black gave a helping hand with – 17...cxd4?! 18.♕xd4 ♘c5 19.♘e3 and lost the game subsequently.

13...♖fe8 14.♖fe1 h6 15.♕c3 a5 16.♗h3!

This is a standard method for White to repel the black bishop away from the centre, avoiding its exchange.

16...♗b7 17.♘d2 e5 18.e4 exd4 19.♕xd4 ♘c5



So, White has a stable advantage after the opening – a bishop-pair and a powerful centre.

20.f4?!

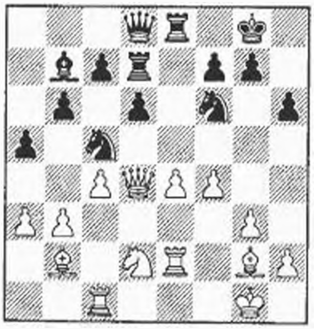
The more experienced positional players would not be so much in a hurry to play that active move, which weakens the e4-pawn. It was worth considering improving the placement of the pieces first i.e. to double the rooks, to bring the knight to c3 or e3, and it will have attractive prospects in the centre from there. Moreover White should play f2-f3, so that he would not need to calculate variations in the process of regrouping!

20...♖ad8 21.♗g2 ♖d7!

This is an excellent manoeuvre! The rook will go to e7 and the queen...what do you think? It will go to a8, of course! As a result of all that the e4-pawn will be under attack six times altogether!

22.a3 ♕d8 23.♖e2?!

The doubling of the rooks is a quite reasonable decision, except that the pieces should be placed on defended squares if possible as a rule! It was much more logical for White to follow his previous move with 23.b4 ♘a4 24.♗a1, but Black could counter that with 24...c5!, and his knight would come back to c5 with a good counterplay. White had to start doubling the rooks with 23.♖e3 and later after 23...♖de7 24.♖ce1 ♕a8 25.h3 (or 25. ♕c3) the position would have been more or less balanced dynamically. It is disadvantageous for Black to capture the central pawn with – 25...♘cxe4 26.♘xe4 ♗xe4 – because the bishop on e4 will be dangerously pinned. White will have a powerful initiative after the retreat of the queen to d1 or the pawn advance g3-g4.



23...d5!

This is a spectacular and quite surprising strike! It is in fact quite simple from the tactical point of view, because you only have to calculate one move lines; nevertheless it can be easily overlooked. When you play with White in a position like that you get used to the idea that you control the d5-square absolutely, so **you do not even conceive** that Black can break right there. It comes just like a jolt from the blue!

24.cxd5

White cannot capture now with the e4-pawn since he loses a rook. The line 24.e5? dxc4! is a disaster for White too.

24...♗xd5 25.♕c3

White retreats his queen so that it is eyeing the g7-square in order to prolong the life of the e4-pawn.

25...♗b7

Black could have won a pawn with 25...♗xb3 26.♘xb3 ♖d3 27.♕c2 ♘xb3, but after 28.♖ce1 White would have a powerful initiative with his excellent pair of bishops!

26.♕c2 ♘d3!

White fails to consolidate.

27.♗xf6 ♕xf6

Black was clearly better after 27...♘xc1! 28.♗xd8 ♘xe2+ 29.♔f2 ♘d4 – because his two rooks would have been much stronger then White's queen. The endgame with an exchange down for White after 30.♕xc7 ♖xc7 31.♗xc7, is also not a bed of roses for him after the penetration of the black rook – 31...♖c8 32.♗xb6 ♖c2 33.♔e3 ♘xb3 34.♘xb3 ♖c3+ etc.

28.♖f1 ♕d4+ 29.♔h1 ♘c5 30.♘f3 ♕d3

That line was also not so bad for Black after all, since he was clearly better!

31.b4 ♗a6

The best variation here for Black was 31...axb4 32.axb4 ♕xc2 33.♖xc2 ♗xe4 34.♖e2 ♘d3 and White would not get any dividends out of the pin and he would just remain a pawn down for nothing!

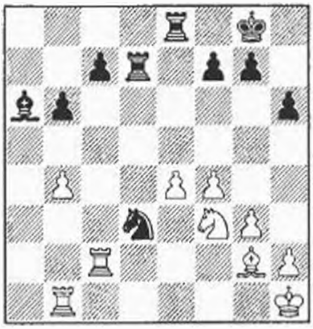
32.♖fe1 ♕xc2 33.♖xc2 ♘d3

33...♖xe4!? 34.bxc5 ♖xe1+ 35.♘xe1 ♖d1+.

34.♖b1

The line 34.♖a1 axb4 35.axb4 ♗b7 was not attractive for White at all, while 34.♖d2 deserved serious attention. The point was that after 34...axb4 35.axb4 ♖dd8 36.♖b1! it was not good for Black to capture the pawn because of – 36...♖xe4 37.b5 ♗c8 38.♘e5!

34...axb4 35.axb4



Now the unthinkable happened!

35...♘xb4??

Black had obviously a blind spot at that moment. Of course he had to snatch the valuable present – 35...♖xe4, and after 36.b5 he could have even retreated to the long diagonal with – 36...♗b7 and the moves of the white knight would not have been dangerous because of the resource ♖e4-e1!, or even capturing on e5 with the knight, in case of 37.♘e5.

36.♖xb4 ♖d1+ 37.♘g1!

Look what an unpleasant surprise! The young player captures a piece and refuses to give it back. He obviously does not respect his elders...

37...c5 38.♖xb6 ♗d3 39.♖c3 ♖a8!

Jan is still alert and trying to create inventively some threats.

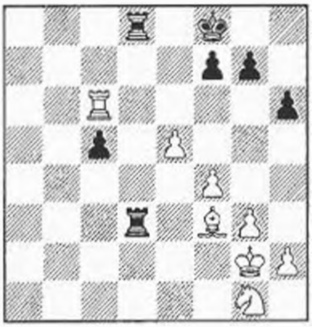
40.♗f3! ♖d2 41.♖xd3!

After 41.♖xc5 g6! White will have problems neutralizing the penetration of the black rooks along the second rank.

41...♖xd3 42.e5

White gave back some part of his extra material but Black's attack has been parried. White can now start pressing his advantage home.

42...♖ad8 43.♔g2 ♔f8 44.♖c6



It is important that White's active rook remained on the board. It would not be easy at all to win the game without it.

44...♖c3 45.♘e2 ♖c4 46.♔f2 ♖b8 47.♗d5 ♖c2 48.♗e4 ♖c4 49.♗d3

This ousting of the black rook was quite skillful.

49...♖a4 50.♖xc5 ♖d8 51.♗c4 ♖a7

52.♔e3 ♖a3+ 53.♔e4 ♖d7 54.♖c8+ 1–0

The white knight is headed to checkmate the black king via the d4-square.

Chess is a cruel game, indeed. Some people are lucky and some other people can only regret bitterly over their missed possibilities. Imagine **what a position** Timman did not win today. Moreover not only he did not win it, but he even lost it. You would not wish a thing like that to happen to your enemies either...

34 B33

Shirov – Kramnik
Round 5 16.01
Notes by M. Notkin

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 e5

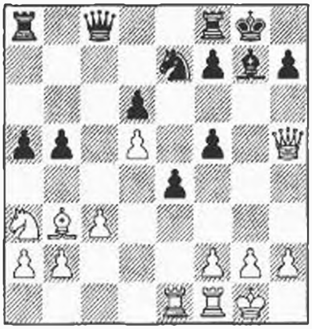
The Sveshnikov Variation served Kramnik loyally for many years before the Berlin Wall era.

6.♘db5 d6 7.♗g5 a6 8.♘a3 b5 9.♗xf6 gxf6 10.♘d5 f5 11.♗d3 ♗e6 12.0–0 ♗xd5 13.exd5 ♘e7 14.c3 ♗g7 15.♕h5 e4 16.♗c2 0–0 17.♖ae1 ♕c8 18.♗b3

Just few years ago 18.♔h1 had been considered to be the main continuation. In Dortmund 2002 Leko demonstrated an important improvement – 18...♖b8 and won two critical games against Shirov and Topalov. Then in the rapid match in Mainz Ponomariov successfully employed the text move against Anand.

18...a5

Anand played 18...♘g6 which let White activate the knight – 19.♘c2 ♖e8 20.f4! exf3 21.♖xe8+ ♕xe8 22.♕xf3 f4 23.♖e1 ♕d7 24.♘b4! a5 25.♘c6 with a better position.



19.♕g5

In case of 19.♘xb5 a4 20.♗d1 (worse is 20.♗c2 ♕c5 and White should play 21.♘a3) 20...♕c5 21.♗e2 ♘xd5 Black has sufficient counterplay as 22.♕xf5?! is met by 22...♘xc3! 23.♕xc5 ♘xe2+ 24.♖xe2 dxc5.

19...♕b7

A new move. After 19...♘g6 20.♘xb5 a4 21.♗d1 ♕c5 22.c4!? (22.♘d4 ♗xd4 23.cxd4 ♕xd4, Werle – Nunn, Hamburg 2003, and here 24.♕xf5 is worth considering) 22...♕xc4 23.♘xd6 ♕xa2 24.♖e2 ♕xd5 25.♘xf5 ♖a5 26.g4 a double-edged position arose in Bruzon – Handke, Oropesa del Mar 1999.

20.f3 h6 21.♕g3

Keeping an eye on Black's bishop. Less precise is 21.♕f4 (keeping an eye on the f5-pawn!) 21...a4 22.♗c2 b4 23.cxb4 (23.♘c4 works only with the queen on g3 – see the game) 23...♕xb4 and the white knight doesn't feel at ease.

21...a4

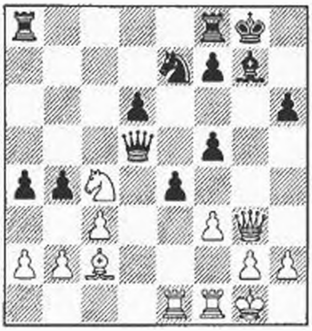
After 21...♘xd5 22.fxe4 fxe4 23.♖f5 White has an advantage thanks to the opponent's weak pawns at b5, d6, and e4.

22.♗c2 b4 23.♘c4

Shirov takes the first opportunity to improve his knight's position. After 23.cxb4 ♘xd5 24.fxe4 f4 25.♕h4 ♘xb4 (25...♘e3? 26.♖xf4) 26.♗b1 ♘c6 the position is roughly equal.

23...♕xd5

23...bxc3 24.fxe4 fxe4 (24...cxb2? 25.exf5) 25.bxc3 f5 26.♘e3 favours White though the defensive resources are not exhausted. 23...b3 24.axb3 axb3 25.♗b1 doesn't change much.



24.fxe4!

That's Shirov's idea!

24...♕xc4 25.exf5

It's impossible for Black to retain the piece.

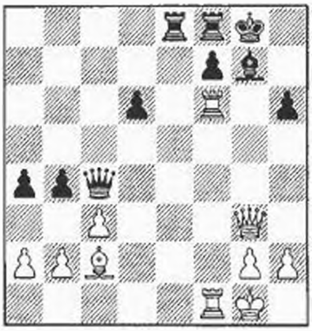
25...♘d5

Black could get a safe position by 25...♘xf5 26.♖xf5 ♖ae8! (too risky is 26...♕xa2 27.♖f4 and after ♕d3 White has a dangerous attack e.g. 27...♕xb2 28.♕d3 ♖fe8 29.♕h7+ ♔f8 30.♖xf7+! ♔xf7 31.♗g6+ and ♖f1+ winning).

26.f6 ♘xf6 27.♖xf6 ♖ae8

27...bxc3 comes into consideration and if 28.bxc3 ♕xa2 obtaining a promising passed pawn while White's attack lacks vigour – 29.♕d3 ♖fe8 (or even 29...♕xc2! 30.♕xc2 ♗xf6) 30.♕h7+ ♔f8 and the f7 pawn is protected by the queen. Shirov should have preferred 28.♖xh6 with unclear play.

28.♖ef1



28...♖e2?!

A pseudo-active move which only allows White to improve the position of his bishop. Better was 28...bxc3 29.bxc3 (29.♖xh6 ♕d4+ 30.♔h1 ♕e3 with perpetual) 29...♕c5+ 30.♔h1 ♖e3 31.♖6f3 ♕c4!.

29.♗d3 ♕c5+ 30.♔h1 ♖e3

After 30...♖xb2 31.♖xh6 the black king would hardly escape.

31.♖6f3 ♖xf3 32.♕xf3 bxc3 33. bxc3 ♕e5?!

33...♕xc3? loses to 34.♕f5; after 33...♗xc3 34.♕e4 f5 35.♕xa4 White combines the advance of the passed a-pawn with threats to the enemy king; but by means of 33...f5! Black could remove the threats along the b1–h7 diagonal. After 34.♗xf5 (or 34.c4 ♔h8) 34...♕xc3 the game would have ended up in a draw.

34.c4 ♔h8?! 35.♗c2 ♕a5?

The decisive mistake. Correct was 35...♕e6 36.♕d3 ♕g6 trying to reach the ending with opposite coloured bishops.

36.♕d3

White wins the important d6-pawn and obtains a passed pawn. The game is over.

36...f5 37.♕xd6 ♕c3 38.♗d3 ♕d2 39.c5!

Nothing can stop it from promotion.

39...♕xa2 40.c6 ♖g8

Setting a last trap.

41.♕g6!

41.c7?? ♕xg2+ 42.♔xg2 ♗e5+ 43.♔f3 ♗xd6 44.♖c1 ♖c8=

41...♖f8 42.c7 ♕g8 43.♕c6 ♖c8 44.♗a6 1–0

35 **B30**

Topalov – Van Wely

Round 5 16.01

Notes by S. Shipov

The Bulgarian chess-player lost an unlucky game that day, but all that was... absolutely logical! He is totally obsessed with complicating the game and he often disregards simple and quite favourable lines for him. Sometimes that approach backfires...

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♘c3

One can call that move order "anti – Cheljabinsk". Everybody from the world chess-elite must fight nowadays the invention of the masters from the Ural mountains somehow.

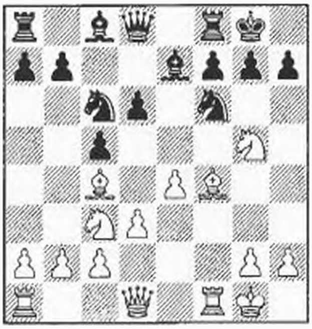
3...e5

Black weakens the d5 square confidently after that move order, but prevents d2-d4. White obtains the desired Sicilian positions after 3...d6 4.d4, 3...e6 4.d4 or 3...♘f6 4.♗b5!.

4.♗c4 ♗e7 5.d3 d6 6.0–0 ♘f6 7.♘g5 0–0 8.f4

This is White's only way to organize something like an attack and it is good enough. He opens the f-file and gets a certain initiative.

8...exf4 9.♗xf4



9...♘a5

This is logical because Black must get rid of the pressure against the f7 square if he can. Some months later Black decided to neutralize the bishop on c4 in another fashion: 9...h6 10.♘f3 ♗e6 11.♘d5 (Black was threatening d6-d5) 11...♗xd5 12.exd5 ♘a5 13.♘h4 ♘xc4 14.dxc4 ♘xd5 15.♕xd5 ♗xh4 Kramnik – Leko, Linares 2003, and although Black failed to equalize completely after the opening he succeeded to draw the game at the end.

10.♕d2 ♘xc4 11.dxc4

Black managed to exchange White's powerful bishop but he paid a dear price for it. The central d-file has been opened and White can exert a strong pressure against the d6-pawn and additionally the d5-outpost is at his disposal.

11...♗g4

This novelty is with the idea to bring the bishop eventually to g6 in order to attack the e4-pawn. There was no real fight in the game Kovalev – Christiansen, Eupen 1996 – 11...h6 12.♘f3 ♖e8 13.♖ad1 ♗g4 14.h3 ♗h5 15.♗xd6 (was it really worth to be so much in a hurry?) 15...♗xd6 16.♕xd6 ♕xd6 17.♖xd6 ♘xe4 18.♘xe4 ♖xe4 19.♖d7 f6 20.♖xb7 – draw.

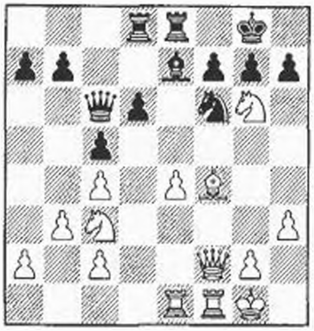
12.♘f3 ♖e8 13.♕f2

This was a correct decision because the straightforward pressure against the d6-pawn was leading only to exchanges after all, since Black would have taken the e4-pawn in his stead.

13...♕b6 14.b3 ♗h5 15.♖ae1 ♕c6 16.h3 ♖ad8 17.♘h4! ♗g6

Black should not let the enemy knight to f5 and his attempt to counterattack the e4-pawn would not work after – 17...♗f8? 18.♗g5.

18.♘xg6



18...fxg6

This decision was practically forced since after 18...hxg6 19.♗g5 Black would have failed to defend the f7-pawn and rearrange his pieces for active actions successfully, because after 19...♖f8 20.♘d5! he loses material.

19.♕f3 h6

This creates weaknesses (note the g6-square), but believe it or not this is the beginning of a decisive attack too!

20.♘d5 ♔h7

After the exchange on d5 White gets another powerful outpost at his disposal – the e6-square.

21.♗d2 ♕d7 22.♘f4 g5 23.♘e2 ♖f8?!

It would have been quite useful for Black to continue that idea with – 23...g4 in order to exchange his doubled pawn and to endanger the white king.

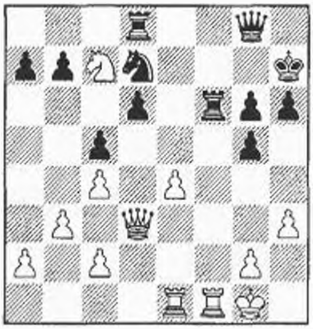
24.♕d3 g6?!

This is another weakening of the black position, but the modest 24...♔h8 would be followed with 25.♘g3 and the white knight goes to f5.

25.♘c3 ♕e6 26.♘d5

The seventh rank is opened now and White would be happy to open the centre.

26...♘d7 27.♘c7 ♕g8 28.♗c3 ♗f6 29.♗xf6 ♖xf6



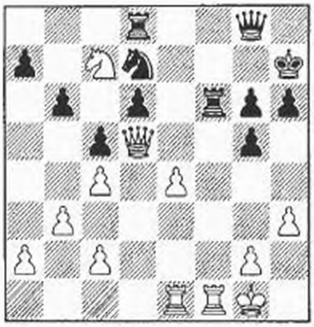
White has a clear advantage now. The pawn on d6 is very weak and the black king seems to be vulnerable. The queen on g8 looks awkwardly placed. It looks like Black's position is about to crumble any moment now. Who would have thought that Black was to be acclaimed soon?

30.♕d5

This is a strong move, but... the first step towards disaster as well. It was much simpler for White to play 30.♖xf6 ♘xf6 31.♖f1 and Black's defence would have been really difficult! Black's knight would have to abandon the f6-square and retreat to e8 or h5 and the white knight returns to d5 with a vengeance.

30...b6

It was not good for Black to play 30...♕xd5 31.exd5! ♖xf1+ 32.♔xf1 and the penetration of the white rook is unavoidable because after 32...♘e5 33.♘b5 the black knight on e5 is not stable.



31.♕b7?!

The pursuit of a rook pawn with White's most powerful piece seemed to be a risky business, particularly in the middlegame and in the time-trouble too! White could have returned to the reasonable central strategy with 31.♘b5!.

31...♕g7! 32.♕xa7 ♖df8

White's queen gobbled up a pawn but it became too difficult to bring it back into action. Meanwhile Black managed to create powerful threats against the white king...

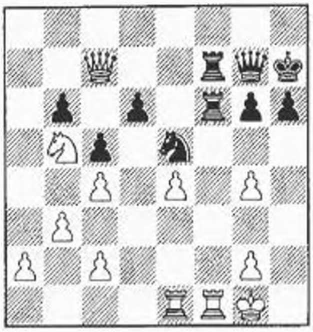
33.♘b5 ♖8f7 34.♕c7

Or 34.♕a3 ♖xf1+ 35.♖xf1 ♖xf1+ 36.♔xf1 ♕a1+ 37.♔f2 ♕d1 and Black has at least a draw.

34...g4!

This is an excellent chance! Loek is creating favourable conditions to bring his knight into the attack.

35.hxg4 ♘e5



36.♕xb6??

In principle it pays to be greedy in chess but not so much after all! Vesselin obviously blundered in the time-trouble. It was correct for him to play 36.♕c8, defending the g4-pawn and the game would have probably ended in a draw by repetition after – 36...♖f8 37.♕c7 ♖8f7 38.♕c8.

36...♘xg4

This raging horse now is in a fighting position and the white king is already beyond salvation!

37.e5 ♖xf1+ 0–1

Vesselin managed to calculate here the rather simple line: 37...♖xf1+ 38.♖xf1 ♖xf1+ 39.♔xf1 ♕f8+ 40.♔e2 ♕f2+ 41.♔d1 (41.♔d3 ♕e3#) 41...♘e3+ 42.♔c1 ♕xc2# and resigned!

So the expected outsider Loek van Wely got a "+1" score and joined the fight for the leadership in the tournament. Well done!

36 **D97**

Bareev – Van Wely

Round 6 18.01

Notes by S. Shipov

Loek was a really pleasant surprise in that tournament! Instead of having quietly a rest at the bottom of the tournament table as he did the two previous years, he was trying to win the event! It should be noted that everyone there was trying to beat him and that could not possibly be done without risk. For example Evgeny went too far today and Loek was on the alert as he proved to be a tough nut to crack! I do not think that Bareev would have played so risky in a position like that against Shirov or Kramnik. Today's defeat of the recent leader just shows once again that you should have in mind the evaluation of the position above all when you play chess and act accordingly. Sometimes you need to set limits to your ambitions...

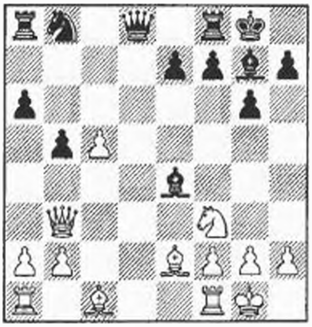
1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 d5 4.♘f3 ♗g7 5.♕b3

This is Botvinnik's system in the Gruenfeld Defence.

5...dxc4 6.♕xc4 0–0 7.e4 a6

This is the Budapest variation. Black plans to accomplish an enlarged fianchetto. The efforts of the Hungarian experts of the Gruenfeld Defence, beginning with Adorjan, were quite considerable in its development. Accordingly this method of countering White's expansion in the centre became really popular.

8.♗e2 b5 9.♕b3 c5 10.dxc5 ♗b7 11.0–0 ♘xe4 12.♘xe4 ♗xe4



This is one of the key positions of the variation.

13.♗f4

This development of the bishop is very fashionable. White used to place the same bishop one square further along the same diagonal before.

13...♗d5N

This is something new for the theory. Black has tested here: 13...♘c6 14.♖ad1 ♕c8 (it is too bad for Black to play 14...♕a5? 15.♘g5 ♗f5 16.♗f3 ♖ac8 17.g4 h6 18.♘xf7+– Kazhgaleyev – Konguvel, Calcutta 2001) 15.♕e3 ♗f5 (15...♕f5!?) 16.♘e5 ♗xe5 17.♗xe5 ♕e6 18.♗f4 ♖ac8 19.♗f3 ♗g4 20.♕xe6 ♗xe6 and the endgame was evidently in favour of Black, Najer – A.Timofeev, St. Petersburg 2002.

14.♕e3 ♗xb2 15.♖ad1

White has a powerful pressure for the pawn.

15...e6 16.♘d4 ♗xd4

Black is now obliged to part with his most valuable bishop in order to hold his position in the centre. The dark squares around the black king become very vulnerable as a result and it can get checkmated even after some minor imprecision. It was also too risky for Black to play 16...♕a5 17.♗f3!.

17.♖xd4 ♘c6 18.♖d2 ♕f6 19.♖c1

♖fe8 20.h3 e5

Black managed to neutralize the pressure on the dark squares, but the bishop on d5 was not stable anymore.

21.♗g5 ♕e6 22.♗g4!

Evgeny provokes an additional weakening of the position of the black king.

22...f5

Meanwhile, this “weakening” leads to a fortification of Black’s central position.

23.♗d1!

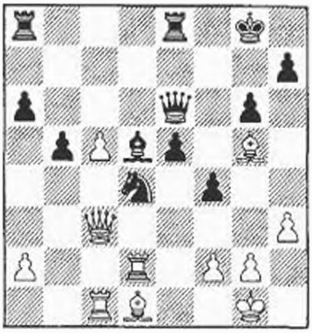
This is with the transparent threat ♖d2xd5! The Moscow player has always been a master of the exploitation of the bishop pair advantage.

23...f4

White can counter 23...♘d4 with the undermining move 24.f4!.

24.♕c3 ♘d4

Black would not have improved his situation much with 24...b4 25.♕b2.



25.♗xf4!

This is a powerful blow against the black centre.

25...♗xa2

Loek thinks quite correctly that he should not suffer in vain, so he captures a pawn and hopes for the best...!

26.c6

I think that after 26.♗g4! ♕f6 (26...♕c4 27.♕b2; 26...♕b3 27.♕a1!) 27.♗xe5 ♕xe5 28.♖xd4 White could get a much better position – the material is equal, but the c5-pawn is dangerous and Black’s king is exposed...

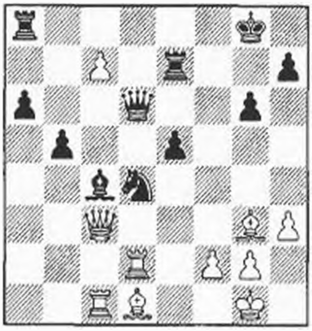
26...♗c4!

This bishop is quite stable here!

27.c7

White could have tried here, as well as during the next few moves, to capture the pawn on e5 first and then the knight on d4 and to exchange the light squared bishops with the idea... to make a draw! The point is that the draw was definitely not a part of Evgeny’s plans. He complicates the situation consistently in order to force a mistake by his opponent.

27...♕d6 28.♗g3 ♖e7



29.♕a5

White is hardly better after 29.f4 ♕xc7 30.fxe5 ♘f5 31.♗f4. The move 29.♗xe5, was leading to equality as usual – 29...♕xe5 30.♖xd4 ♕xc7 31.♗f3 ♖c8 32.♕a3 ♖ce8 33.♗d5+ etc.

29...♖c8

But not 29...♖xc7? 30.♖xd4!.

30.♗g4 ♖cxc7 31.♖cd1 ♘b3!?

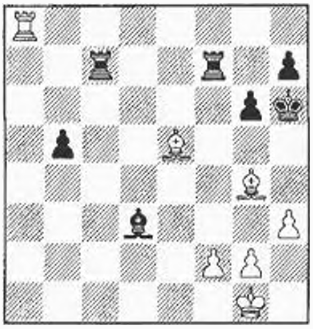
Black finally manages to reduce the tension in the centre. The possibility

31...♕c5 was leading to a more complex situation. After White captures the a6-pawn Black succeeds to push his passed pawn to b3.

32.♖xd6 ♘xa5 33.♗h4 ♖f7 34.♖xa6 ♘c6 35.♖d6

White activated his pieces to a maximal extent, but that was still not enough to win.

35...♘b4 36.♖a8+ ♔g7 37.♗g3 ♘d3 38.♖xd3 ♗xd3 39.♗xe5+ ♔h6



This is the critical moment of the game! The position has simplified and there was only one move to the time-control...

40.♖d8?

This is already a little bit too much! It is possible to play for a win, bypassing a lost position only under extreme situations when you have nothing to lose. This game was played in the middle of the tournament and there were a lot of games left to play to the end of it. Evgeny probably failed to consider all this in the heat of the time-trouble. After 40.♗xc7 ♖xc7 41.♖b8 I do not think that it would be a problem for a superb technician like him to save the arising endgame.

40...♖ce7

It was even better for Black to play 40...♖c1+ 41.♔h2 ♗c4.

41.♗d6

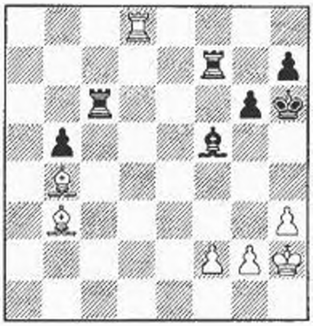
It was more stubborn for White to defend with 41.♗c3! threatening to check with the bishop from the d2-square.

41...♖e1+

No, Black does not intend to give back the exchange anymore, although it will be very difficult for him to win that game. White's powerful bishops sting like vicious wasps Black's king and rooks.

42.♔h2 ♗f5 43.♗b4 ♖e6 44.♗d1 ♖c6 45.♗b3?

White's chances to save the game after 45.♗e2! were considerable.



45...♗e6!

Black's task now becomes much easier since the exchange of a couple of bishops is unavoidable.

46.♗d2+

46.♗d1 ♖xf2-+.

46...♔g7 47.♗xe6 ♖xe6

Presently half of the squares on the board are already safe for the black pieces.

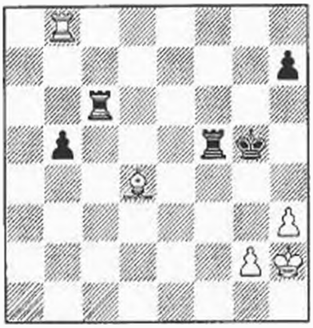
48.♗c3+ ♔h6 49.f4

In case of 49.♗d2+ g5 50.♖d5 (50.h4 ♖xf2 51.♗xg5+ ♔g6) 50...♖xf2 51.♗xg5+ ♔g6 52.♖xb5 ♖ee2 there arises a technical endgame in which each side has but only one pawn left. White will not survive in that endgame.

49...♖c6 50.♗d4 g5!

It was essential for Black to free the king from its cage.

51.fxg5+ ♔xg5 52.♖b8 ♖f5



Later in the game Loek slowly and methodically materialized his winning advantage.

53.♖g8+ ♖g6 54.♖h8 h5 55.♔g3 ♖d5 56.♗e3+ ♔f6+ 57.♔f3 ♔g7 58.♖b8 ♖e6 59.♗f4 ♖d3+ 60.♔f2 ♖b3 61.♖d8 ♖e4 62.♗d2 ♔f6 63.♖f8+ ♔e6 64.♖h8 ♖e5 65.♗f4 ♖f5 66.g3 ♖c5 67.♗e3 ♖f5+ 68.♗f4 b4 69.♔e2 ♖a5 70.♖h6+ ♔f7 71.♔d2 ♖a2+ 72.♔c1 ♖f3 73.♔b1 b3 0–1

37 E15

Ivanchuk – Anand

Round 6 18.01

1.c4 ♘f6 2.d4 e6 3.♘f3 b6 4.g3 ♗a6 5.♘bd2

Ivanchuk chose in his game against Grischuk in the 4th round the more principled line 5.b3, but at the end that game was only 5 moves longer than this one...

5...♗b4 6.a3

White won after 6.♕c2 in the game Radjabov – Timman, Wijk aan Zee 2003.

6...♗xd2+ 7.♘xd2 ♗b7 8.♘f3 d5

Strangely enough, but this is a novelty. Black usually places that pawn on d6.

9.cxd5

White could have also played 9.♗g2, for example 9...dxc4 10.♕a4+, but that was mostly a matter of style.

9...♗xd5 10.♗g2 0–0 11.0–0 ♘bd7 12.♗f4 c5 13.dxc5 ½ – ½

38 E92

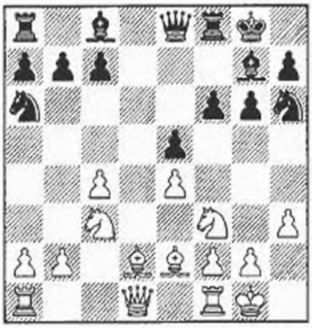
Karpov – Radjabov

Round 6 18.01

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 ♗g7 4.e4 d6 5.♘f3 0–0 6.♗e2 e5 7.♗e3 ♘a6

Black places his knight at the edge of the board because the move 7...♘c6 is not good for him, since the white king has not castled yet and White has 8.d5 ♘e7 9.♘d2±.

8.0–0 ♘g4 9.♗g5 ♕e8 10.dxe5 dxe5 11.h3 f6 12.♗d2 ♘h6



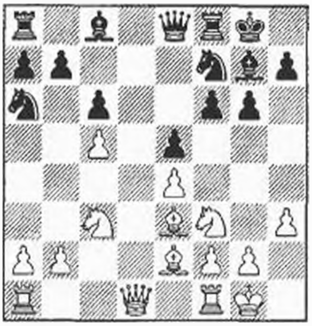
13.♗e3

White is preparing the move c4-c5,

but he did not need to make the last bishop move and he could have played 13.c5!? immediately. After 13...c6 (if Black accepts the pawn sacrifice with – 13...♘xc5 after 14.♕c1 ♘f7 15.♘d5 ♘e6 16.♗b4!± his defence is really difficult as the game Shabalov – Perelshteyn, USA 2003, showed convincingly) 14.♗xa6 bxa6 White has the additional resource 15.♗xh6!, thanks to the omission of the move ♗d2-e3 (in case the black knight manages to go to f7, Black's initiative on the kingside might become ominous as you can see in the game Dizdarevic – Movsesian, Sarajevo 2003, which continued with: 15.♕a4 ♘f7 16.♖ad1 ♖b8 17.b3 ♖b7 18.♘b1 f5 19.♘a3 f4 20.♘c4 g5↑) 15...♗xh6 16.♕a4 and Black must play very carefully in order to avoid getting into a strategically difficult situation rather quickly. For example after 16...♖f7?! (it is stronger for Black to play 16...♖b8!? 17.b3 ♖f7 18.♖ad1 ♗f8 as in the game Zhao Xue – Ye Jiangchuan, Ji Nan 2003, but even then it was not quite clear whether Black's bishop pair was compensating the chronic defects of the black pawn structure on the queenside) 17.♖ad1 ♗f8 18.b4 ♕e6 19.♖d3 ♗b7 20.♖fd1 ♖e8 21.♘d2± as it was played in the game Khalifman – Abashev, Toljatti 2003, White materialized his positional advantage quite instructively.

13...c6 14.c5 ♘f7

Black is preparing f6-f5. If he does not organize some counterplay swiftly he can pay a dear price: 14...♘c7 15.♘d2 ♘f7 16.♘c4 f5 17.exf5 gxf5 18.f4 exf4 19.♗xf4± like in the game Goormachtigh – Meessen, Geel 2002.



15.♗c4?!

This is a new move, but it will hardly attract many followers. White usually plays here 15.♗xa6 bxa6, but after 16.♕a4 (16.♖b1!? Karpov) 16...♖b8! 17.b3 (in case of 17.♘d2?! and 17...f5 18.exf5 gxf5↑ Black had a powerful initiative on the kingside in the game Volkov – Volokitin, Halkidiki 2002) 17...f5 18.exf5 gxf5 19.♖fe1 ♖b7 20.♖ad1 ♖e7⇄ Black was definitely not worse as the game Savchenko – Damljanovic, Halkidiki 2002 showed.

15...♘c7 16.♕b3 ♘e6 17.♗xe6

White decided to part with his light-squared bishop, because in case of 17.♖fd1 ♕e7 he might have problems with the defence of his c5-pawn.

17...♕xe6 18.♕xe6 ♗xe6 19.♖fd1 ♖fd8 20.b3 ♗f8 21.♘a4?!

White did not need to play that move so much. It was better after 21.♘h2 f5 22.f3∓ to fortify the e4-pawn. The twelfth World Champion pointed out that possibility for White in his comments after the game.

21...♗e7 22.♘e1

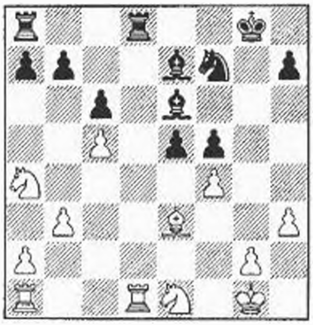
Once again it was better for White to play 22.♘h2 f5 23.f3. The white knight controls the g4-square from h2 and that contains Black's pawn offence on the kingside considerably.

22...f5 23.exf5

The move 23.f3 is not so effective anymore, because after 23...f4 24.♗f2 g5↑ the advance of the black pawns on the kingside seems to be really dangerous, since there is no white knight on h2.

23...gxf5 24.f4

White's defence is not easy either after: 24.f3 f4 25.♗f2 ♗f5∓.



24...exf4!

Black has the bishop pair advantage and he should strive to open the centre. It was weaker for him to play 24...e4, because after 25.♘c2∓ his protected passed pawn would have been reliably blocked and his bishops would not be so mobile.

25.♗xf4 ♘g5!?

The black knight is headed for the central e4-square.

26.♘d3

The exchange of the knights after 26.♘f3 ♘xf3+ 27.gxf3 ♔f7∓ leads to the worsening of White's pawn structure on the kingside.

26...♘e4 27.♗e3 ♗f6 28.♖ac1 ♗f7∓

Black retreats his bishop in anticipation of the move ♘f4. It is quite obvious that White's defence would be very difficult, because his position is much inferior.

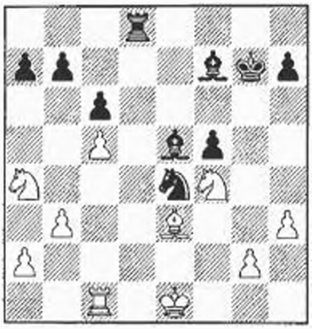
29.♘f4

After 29.♘f2, White should worry about 29...♘g3∓, threatening 30...♘e2+.

29...♗e5 30.♔f1

White brings his king toward the centre in order to simplify the position by exchanging rooks. He should not even think about playing actively right now. For example after 30.g4?! fxg4 31.hxg4 ♘f6–+ his defence crumbles very quickly.

30...♔g7 31.♖xd8 ♖xd8 32.♔e1



32...♖e8!

Teimour Radjabov increases the tension very skillfully. In case of the prophylactic move 32...h5, White can play 33.♖d1!?.

33.♔d1

This is a must, otherwise after: 33.♖d1? ♗xf4 34.♗xf4 ♘c3–+; 33.♔f1? ♘g3+ 34.♔f2 ♗xf4 35.♗xf4 ♘e2–+.

33...♘g3?!

This is the first imprecision by the young grandmaster. It was much stronger for him to play 33...♔f6!? with the idea to follow with 34...♖g8 in order to exploit the fact that White's king was too far away from the kingside.

34.♖c2 ♗c7 35.♗c1 ♘e4 36.♗b2+

♔g8 37.♗c1 h6

Teimour Radjabov is once again not quite on the alert. After 37...h5!∓ White would have no counterplay whatsoever.

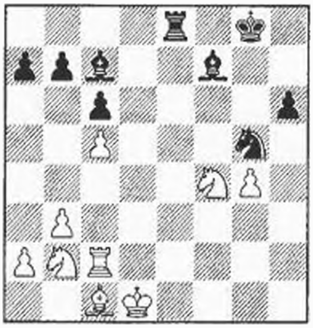
38.g4!?

Karpov forces his opponent to calculate concrete variations right before the time-control. Black might be able to prove now that the white pawn on g4 is terribly weak, but if he fails to do that the ex-world champion will simplify the position even more.

38...fxg4 39.hxg4 ♘g5

If 39...♘f6, then after 40.♖g2∓ with the idea to follow that with 41.g5 White has all chances to save the game. Still Black could have tried 39...♔h7!? and after 40.♖g2 ♖g8∓ the weakness of the g4-pawn is quite considerable.

40.♘b2



40...♘f3?

Radjabov plays the last move of the time-control and dissipates most of his advantage. It was not so good for him to play 40...♖e4?! because of 41.♘bd3∓, but after 40...♗xf4 41.♗xf4 ♖e4 42.♗b8 (in case of 42.♘d3 ♖d4∓ White's knight is quite unpleasantly pinned) 42...a6 43.♖h2 ♔g7 44.♖g2 ♗e6∓ Black wins a pawn. Now it becomes clear that the risky move 38.g4!? proved to be quite justified.

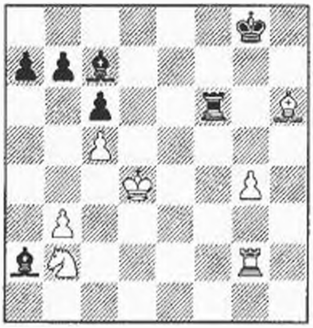
41.♘fd3 ♖d8

It was maybe worth trying for Black 41...h5!? 42.gxh5 ♗xh5 43.♖g2+ ♔h7 44.♔c2 ♘d4+↑. Black's initiative seems to be quite strong despite the material equality.

42.♖g2 ♗g6 43.♔e2 ♗xd3+ 44.♔xf3

But not 44.♘xd3? ♖xd3! 45.♔xd3 ♘e1−+.

44...♖f8+ 45.♔e3 ♗b1 46.♔d4 ♗xa2 47.♗xh6 ♖f6



48.♘d3!?

White continues to simplify the position and this is probably the most rational way to save the game. The alternative was: 48.g5 ♖f4+ 49.♔e3 ♗xb3 50.♘d3 ♖f7 51.g6 ♖e7+ 52.♔d4 ♗d5 53.♖f2 ♖e4+ 54.♔c3 ♖e8 55.♖f5∓ and Black can hardly improve his position.

48...♗xb3 49.♖b2

49.g5!? ♖f7 50.g6 ♖d7+ 51.♔c3 ♗e6 52.♖e2 ♖e7 53.♗g5 ♖e8 54.♗f6=∞ (Tsesarsky).

49...♖xh6 50.♖xb3 b5 51.cxb6 axb6

Black's winning chances would have decreased considerably with a broken pawn chain on the queenside after 51...♗xb6+ 52.♔e5 ♔f7 53.g5=∞.

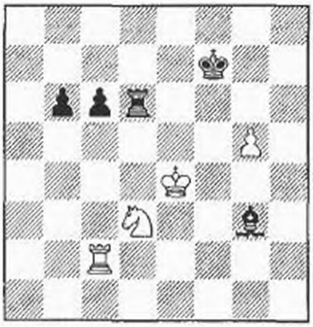
52.♖a3 ♗h2

In case of 52...♖h4 White makes a draw with 53.♖a8+! (it is weaker for White to play 53.♘f2 because of 53...♗d6 54.♖f3 ♗c5+ 55.♔c3 and now 55...♔g7!∓, with the idea to exchange on f2, because the immediate 55...♗xf2? 56.♖xf2 ♖xg4, does not work because of 57.♖f6=∞) 53...♔h7 (after 53...♔g7? 54.♖a7! Black loses his bishop) 54.♖c8 ♖xg4+ 55.♔e3 ♖g7 56.♘b4 c5 57.♘d5=.

53.♔e4

The white king is ready now to support his g-pawn just in case.

53...♔f7 54.g5 ♖d6 55.♖a2 ♗g3 56.♖c2



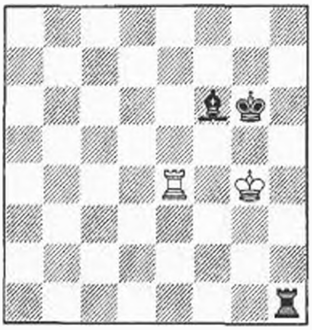
56...c5

Teimour Radjabov enabled his famous opponent to transfer into a theoretically drawn endgame. The analysis showed that he had hardly anything better than that. For example after 56...♔g6 White can draw with 57.♘e5+ ♗xe5 (57...♔xg5?? 58.♘f7+–) 58.♔xe5 ♖d5+ 59.♔e4=, and in case of 56...♖e6+ he can continue with 57.♔f5 c5 (if 57...♗c7 58.♖a2 c5 and now 59.g6+! ♖xg6 60.♖a7= clarifies the situation once and for all) 58.♘xc5 ♖e5+ 59.♔g4 bxc5 60.♔xg3 ♖xg5 61.♔f4= with a draw.

57.♘xc5 bxc5 58.♖xc5 ♔g6 59.♖d5 ♖a6 60.♔f3 ♗d6 61.♔e4 ♗e7 62.♖c5 ♖a4+ 63.♔d5 ♗xg5=

Black has an extra bishop but there are no pawns left on the board and the game should end in a draw after a careful play by White. We have to admit that A.Karpov defended that endgame in an exemplary fashion and did not even let his opponent isolate his king at the edge of the board.

64.♖e4 ♖a5+ 65.♔e6 ♖a6+ 66.♔e5 ♗f6+ 67.♔f4 ♖a1 68.♖e6 ♖f1+ 69.♔g4 ♖h1 70.♖e4

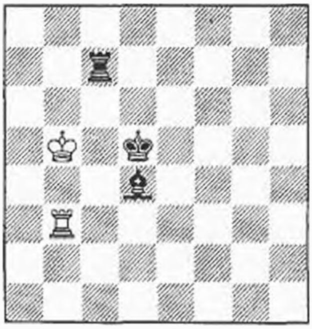


White's defensive scheme is relatively simple: he places his king and rook on squares with an opposite colour of that of the bishop, just one square away.

70...♖h5 71.♔f4 ♖f5+ 72.♔e3 ♗e5 73.♖c4 ♖f1 74.♖c2 ♔f5 75.♔d3 ♖d1+ 76.♖d2 ♖a1 77.♔c4 ♖a8 78.♖f2+ ♔e6 79.♖d2 ♖a4+ 80.♔c5 ♖e4 81.♖c2 ♗d6+ 82.♔c6 ♗f4 83.♖c5 ♗e3 84.♖c3 ♗d4 85.♖g3

The white king remained close to the rook until now, while presently they parted for a while. It was also possible to defend with the routine 85.♖c4 after which Black would have probably continued with 85...♔e5.

85...♖e2 86.♖g6+ ♗f6 87.♖h6 ♖c2+ 88.♔b5 ♔e5 89.♖h5+ ♔d4 90.♖h6 ♗e5 91.♖b6 ♔d5 92.♔a6 ♗c7 93.♖b3 ♗d6 94.♔b5 ♗c5 95.♖d3+ ♗d4 96.♖b3 ♖c8 97.♔b4 ♖c7 98.♔b5



White is back to the already familiar defensive scheme.

98...♗c3 99.♔a6 ♔c4 100.♖b7 ♖c8 101.♖b1 ♖a8+ 102.♔b7 ♖h8 103.♖c1 ♔d4 104.♔c6 ♖c8+ 105.♔d7 ♖c4 106.♔c6 ♔e4 107.♖d1 ♗b4 108.♔d7 ♖c2 109.♖h1 ♗d2 110.♖h2 ♖a2 111.♔c6 ♔e5 112.♖e2+ ♔d4 113.♖g2 ½ – ½

The fifty move limit has been exhausted already.

39 **B30**

Kramnik – Grischuk

Round 6 18.01

1.e4 c5 2.♘c3 ♘c6 3.♘f3 e5

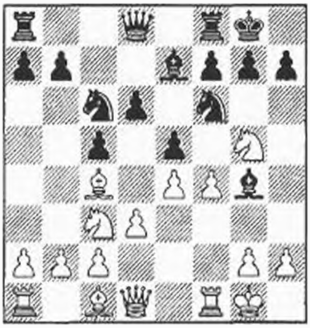
This is Black's most principled answer otherwise White can play d2-d4 on his next move. Black is now ready to prove that the weakening of the d5-square is not so significant.

4.♗c4 d6

4...♘f6? 5.♘g5.

5.d3 ♗e7 6.0–0 ♘f6 7.♘g5 0–0 8.f4 ♗g4

8...exf4 for Black was tested in the games Topalov – Van Wely, Wijk aan Zee 2003, and Kramnik – Leko, Linares 2003.



9.♕e1

Anand chose to retreat with the knight a couple of months later – 9.♘f3 and after 9...exf4 10.♗xf4 ♘d4 11.♔h1 a6 12.♕d2 b5 13.♗b3 ♘xb3 (Black had better trade the knight first 13...♗xf3) 14.axb3 d5 15.♘e5! dxe4 16.♘c6 ♕d7 17.♘xe7+ ♕xe7 18.♗g5 he had a considerable advantage, Anand – Van Wely, Monaco 2003.

In case you like White's position after 9.♘f3 exf4 10.♗xf4, I can recommend to you an interesting idea – the move **2.a3,** after 1.e4 c5. One of my games developed in the following fashion: 1.e4 c5 2.a3 e5 3.♘c3 ♘c6 4.♗c4 d6 5.d3 ♗e7 6.f4 ef 7.♗xf4 ♘f6 8.♘f3 0–0 9.0–0 ♗g4. You might have noticed already that we have come to the position after White 10th move in the game Anand – Van Wely, but with two important advantages for White: 1) it is White to move and not Black; 2) White's pawn is already on a3 and his light-squared bishop has a nice square to retreat to in case of moves by Black like b7-b5. As for the move 2.a3, it is not as bad as it might seem to you. Its idea is to prepare the early move b2-b4 for White, for example after 2...♘c6 or 2...e6 White plays 3.b4!. You might ask then – why not b2-b4 then on move two? Black has several good moves after 2.b4, for example 2...cb 3.a3 d5!. In case of 2.a3 the same idea is already not so good for Black, since after 2.a3 d5 3.ed ♕d5 4.♘c3 White is better. You can find plenty of interesting stuff about all that in the really interesting book of GM Bezgodov "1.e4 c5 2.a3" ("Chess Stars" 2004).

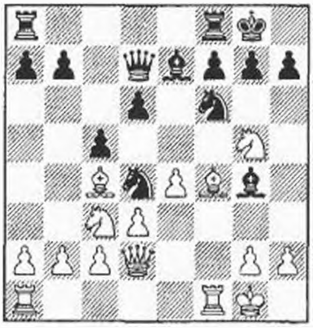
9...exf4 10.♗xf4 ♘d4

Black is threatening the simple capture ♘xc2.

11.♕d2

Shirov offered an exchange sacrifice in this position: 11.e5 dxe5 12.♗xe5, but Leko prudently declined 12...♗h5 (in case of 12...♘xc2 White has a tremendous initiative after 13.♕h4 h5 14.h3 ♘xa1 15.hxg4) 13.♕d2 ♘c6 14.♗xf6 ♗xf6 15.♘ge4 ♗d4+ 16.♔h1 ♘e5 17.♗b3 ♘g4 and Black's prospects were at least equal Shirov – Leko, Monaco 2003.

11...♕d7



12.a4

Kramnik prevents the move b7-b5. Later he came to the conclusion that 12...b5 was in favour of White and played 12.♗e3 (threatening ♗xd4) 12...h6 (in case of 12...b5 White can follow with 13.♗xd4 bxc4 14.♗xf6 ♗xf6 and White has a pleasant choice: to sacrifice the exchange 15.♖xf6 gxf6 16.♘d5, or simply to capture a pawn with 15.dxc4, which is evidently stronger) 13.♘f3 ♘xf3+ 14.gxf3 ♗e6 15.♔h1 ♔h7 16.♗xe6 ♕xe6 17.♖ae1 ♕h3 18.♕g2 ♕xg2+ 19.♔xg2 a6 20.f4 and White had the initiative Kramnik – Degraeve, France 2003.

12...h6 13.♘f3 ♘xf3+ 14.gxf3 ♗e6 15.♔h1 ♔h7

So White's bishop is already on f4 in comparison to the game Kramnik – Degraeve, and if he tries to play in the same fashion with: 16.♗e3 then Black has the counterstrike – 16...d5!.

16.♗b5 ♕d8 17.d4 cxd4 18.♘e2

In case of 18.♕xd4 Black's counterplay is quite sufficient after 18...♘h5 19.♗e3 ♗f6 20.♕d2 ♗e5 21.f4 ♗xc3 22.♕xc3 f5.

18...♘h5 19.♗g3 ♘xg3+ 20.hxg3 ♗g5 ½ – ½

40 **D26**

Krasenkow – Shirov

Round 6 18.01

Notes by S. Shipov

Alexey lost surprisingly easily this game after his two brilliant wins against champions! He lost concentration, or maybe he was tired...

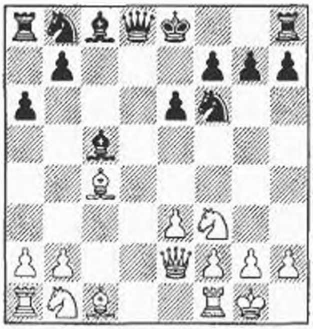
1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.e3 e6 5.♗xc4 c5 6.♕e2

This is the Furman variation. White is preparing to clarify the situation in the centre avoiding the exchange of queens.

6...a6

Black could have entered a position with an isolated central pawn for White with 6...cxd4 7.exd4 – and that was an alternative to consider seriously.

7.dxc5! ♗xc5 8.0–0



The pawn structure is symmetrical indeed, but the advantage of the first move is quite telling. Black needs to play very precisely in order not to come under a powerful attack.

8...b5

The natural move 8...0–0 is wrong because after 9.e4! followed by e4-e5 White gets a crushing kingside attack.

9.♗d3 ♘c6

Black can play here another seemingly natural move – 9...♗b7? – but after... 10.♗xb5+! White wins at least a pawn.

10.♖d1

Here 10.e4 is a mistake for White due to 10...♘b4!.

10...♕c7 11.a4!

White is creating a target.

11...bxa4

Black does not solve his problems with 11...b4 12.♘bd2 – because the white pieces have excellent outposts.

12.♖xa4

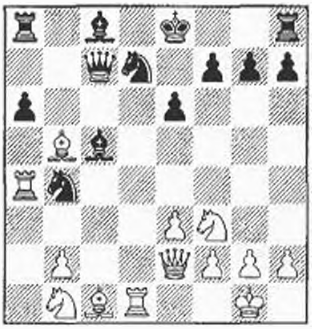
Black's a6-pawn is hanging now.

12...♘b4

Had Black castled already he would have had no problems whatsoever. In fact he lacks just one tempo to complete his development! White had the edge after 12...a5 13.♗d2 ♗b7 14.♖c1±; I believe that it was worth trying to trade a pawn for initiative with 12... 0–0 13.♗xa6 (naturally this is not forced) 13...e5 and White will have to either allow e5-e4, or weaken the d4-square.

13.♗b5+! ♘d7

White would have been slightly better after 13...♗d7 14.♗xd7+ ♘xd7 15.♗d2 a5 16.♖c1 ♕b7 and now not 17.♗c3 0–0 18.♘bd2 ♘d5=, as it was played in the game Botvinnik – Flohr, Leningrad 1933 (!!), but 17.♘a3! and the white knight joins in the attack against the a5-pawn from the c4-square.



14.♗d2!N

This is a very purposeful novelty. Michal improves White's play after a period of ... 58 years! White used to play this position in that ancient USSR championship in the following way – 14.♘g5 0–0 (14...♖b8!?) 15.♗d2 ♖b8 16.♗xd7 (16.♗xb4! axb5 17.♕c2 g6 18.♖a3) 16...♗xd7 17.♖xb4 ♗xb4 18.♕d3 g6 19.♗xb4 ♖xb4 20.♕xd7 ♕xd7 21.♖xd7 ♖c8 22.♘d2 ♖c1+ 23.♘f1 ♖xb2 Kotov – Koblenz, Moscow 1945, and Black's rook and pawn seemed to be superior in that endgame to White's couple of knights.

14...♖b8

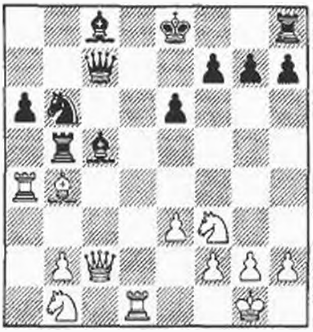
Should Black retreat his knight from b4 – he loses his a6-pawn, while 14...a5 is refuted outright after – 15.♖c1 ♕b6 16.♖xc5! ♕xc5 17.♗xb4 ♕c1+ 18.♕e1 ♕xb2 19.♘d4 etc.

15.♗xb4 ♖xb5 16.♕c2

The black pieces are pinned now.

16...♘b6?!

It was more stubborn for Black to defend with 16...♕b7! 17.♗c3 (17.♗xc5 ♖xc5!) 17...f6, although White was better after that too. It was good for him to follow with 18.♖h4, or 18.♘a3.



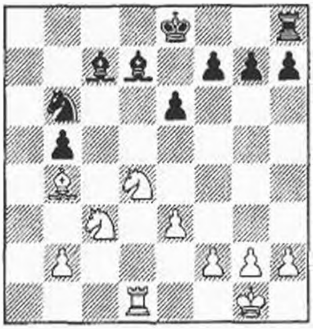
17.♖a5!

This is a very powerful move.

17...♗d6

This is the only defence, for example 17...♖xb4 18.♖xc5 ♕b8 19.♕c3!; or 17...♖xa5 18.♗xa5 ♗d6 19.♕b3!.

18.♕xc7 ♗xc7 19.♖xb5 axb5 20.♘c3 ♗d7 21.♘d4



The opening was totally in favour of White. He kept the enemy king in the centre and he was about to win a pawn. There was in fact no middle game – White went directly into an endgame and he pressed his advantage home quite confidently.

21...♗e5

White's initiative is overwhelming after 21...♘d5 22.♘xd5 exd5 23.♖a1.

22.♘dxb5 f6 23.♘d6+ ♗xd6 24.♖xd6 ♘c4 25.♖a6 ♔f7 26.♖a7 ♖d8 27.f4

This is a very creative approach. Of course White could have played the routine and technical – 27.♗c5, followed 28.b4 etc.

27...♔e8

Or 27...♘xb2? 28.♗a5.

28.♘e4

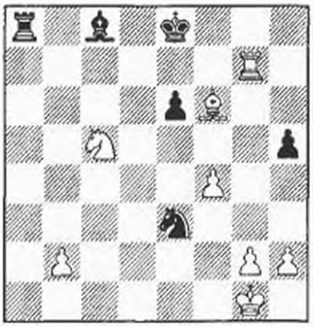
Michal continues to attack the black king despite the rather reduced forces.

28...♖b8 29.♗c3 ♘xe3 30.♘c5 ♗c8 31.♖xg7

Black's kingside crumbles now.

31...h5 32.♗xf6 ♖a8

Or 32...♘g4 33.♗c3 ♖a8 34.b4 ♖a3 35.h3!.



33.h3!

White is aware of the checkmating threat and the rest is easy...

33...♘f5 34.♖c7 ♖a1+ 35.♔f2 ♗a6 36.♘xa6 ♖xa6 37.g4 ♘d6 38.♗e5 hxg4 39.hxg4 ♘f7 40.♗c3 1–0

Krasenkow won this game quite deservedly! He can be after much more convincing performances if he demonstrates such high class playing regularly.

41 E46

Ponomariov – Ju.Polgar

Round 6 18.01

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.e3 0–0 5.♘ge2 d5 6.a3 ♗d6

Black is provoking the move c4-c5, because after the exchange on d5 (7.cxd5 exd5) the bishop will be ideally placed on d6.

7.c5 ♗e7 8.b4 b6 9.♗d2

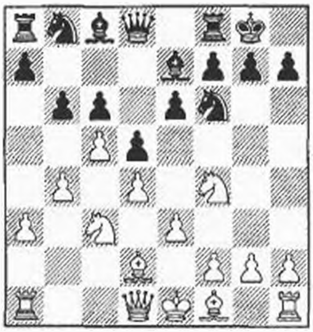
The other possibility for White 9.♘g3 is harmless for Black. After 9...c6 10.♗e2 a5 11.♖b1 ♘bd7 12.0–0 axb4 13.axb4 ♗a6 14.♖e1 ♕c8 15.♕c2 ♗xe2 16.♘gxe2 bxc5 17.bxc5 ♕a6 18.♗d2 ♖fb8= the position was equal in the game Bareev – Kramnik, Monaco 2003.

White has played much more often 9.♘f4, and only after 9...c6 or 9...a5 he decided whether to put his dark-squared bishop on d2 or on b2.

9...c6

In case of 9...a5 White could follow with 10.♘f4 c6 (after 10...axb4 11.axb4 ♖xa1 12.♕xa1 c6 13.♕a7± White's chances are preferable) 11.♘a4!?.

10.♘f4



10...bxc5

The main advantage of the placement of the white bishop on d2 is the point that White can answer 10...a5 with 11.♘a4!?. The game Volkov – Psakhis, Elista 1998, followed with: 11...♘bd7 12.cxb6 axb4 and now White got some edge thanks to the exchange of the dark-squared bishops – 13.♗xb4 ♗xb4+ 14.axb4 ♖b8 15.♗e2 ♘xb6 16.♘c5 ♘bd7 17.♘fd3±.

11.bxc5 e5!

Judit Polgar uses the opportune moment to start immediate actions in the centre of the board. The inert move – 11...♗a6 was presenting White with a slight but lasting advantage 12.♗xa6 ♘xa6 13.♘d3±.

12.dxe5 ♘fd7 13.♘a4

The opponents were following the game Paramos – Mascaro, Cala Mendia

2001, until that moment in which after 13.♘d3 ♘xc5 14.♘xc5 ♗xc5 15.♘a4 ♗e7 16.♕c2 f6 17.♗d3 fxe5 18.♗xh7+ ♔h8 19.h4 e4∞ the position was very complicated with mutual chances.

13...♘xe5

The e5-pawn is much more important. After 13...♘xc5 14.♘xc5 ♗xc5 15.♗d3± White remains with some edge.

14.♗c3 ♕c7 15.♕c2

Ponomariov thinks that White should have played 15.♗e2!? ♘bd7 16.♕d4 ♗f6 17.♕d2∞ in order to get some advantage.

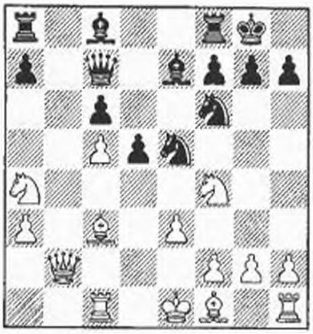
15...♘bd7 16.♗d4 ♕a5+ 17.♗c3 ♕c7 18.♖c1?!

The Ukrainian grandmaster obviously overestimated his position. He had absolutely no reasons to shun the repetition of moves and the draw after 18.♗d4=.

18...♘f6

It looked very good for Black to play 18...♖b8!? 19.♗e2 ♘f6∓ with the idea to follow that with 20...♘e4.

19.♕b2



19...♘g6

The position becomes equal once again. It was much better for Black to play 19...♘ed7! 20.♗d3 (it is wrong for White to play 20.♗e2?! due to 20...♘e4μ and 21.♗xg7?? is a blunder because of 21...♕a5–+) 20...♖b8 21.♕c2 (but not 21.♕a1?! due to 21...d4! 22.♗xd4 ♕a5+ 23.♘c3 ♘xc5∓) 21...♘e5∓ and White would have to part with one of his bishops (analysis of Ponomariov).

20.♘xg6 fxg6 21.♗e5 ♕d8

It is senseless for Black to play 21...♕a5+?!, because after 22.♕b4 ♕xb4+ 23.axb4± the exchange of the queens leads to a better endgame for White.

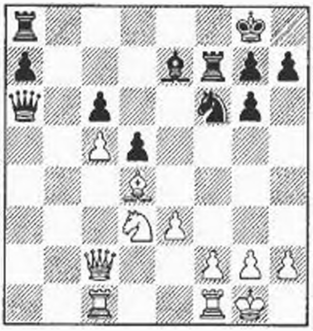
22.♗e2 ♗a6!

White's delay of castling played its destructive role at the end and Black managed to exchange the light-squared bishops with the help of a simple tactical operation.

23.0–0 ♗xe2 24.♕xe2 ♕a5 25.♕c2 ♖f7 26.♘b2

White sacrifices a pawn in order to improve the placement of his knight. He could have continued the fight in a position with material equality with 26.♗d4!? ♖b8 27.♖b1=.

26...♕xa3 27.♘d3≅ ♕a6 28.♗d4



28...♗f8

Black cannot start fighting for the b-file immediately, because after:

28...♖b8? 29.♖a1 ♕b7 30.♖fb1 ♕c7 31.♖xb8+ ♕xb8 32.♘e5+– he loses material.

29.♘b4

If 29.♘e5, then 29...♖c7= (Black loses the queen after 29...♖b7??, because of 30.♖a1 ♕b5 31.♖fb1+–).

29...♕b7 30.♕a4 ♖c8 31.♖b1 ♕c7 32.f3 g5!?

Despite the lack of a pawn for White on the queenside he has the initiative there. If Black wants to play for a win he must seek his chances on the kingside.

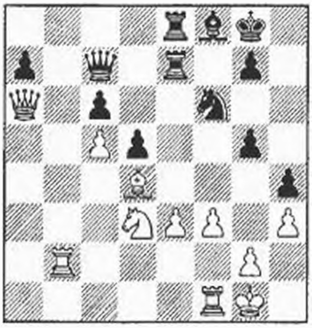
33.♘d3 ♖e8 34.♕a6 h5

After the move 34...g4, White can ignore it in principle with – 35.♖b2!? (after 35.f4 ♕c8 36.♖a1 ♘e4∓ the weakness of the e4-square might become really important later) 35...gxf3 36.gxf3=∞.

35.♖b2 h4 36.h3

The dark squares around the white king have become a bit weak now and that might provoke some tactical complications later.

36...♖fe7



37.♘f2!

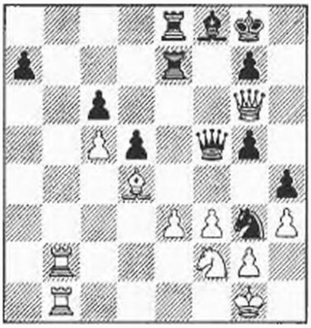
The careless move 37.♖fb1? after 37...♖xe3! 38.♗xe3 ♖xe3 39.♖d1 (39.♖b7 ♕g3→; 39.♖c1 ♕g3 40.♔f1 g4 41.hxg4 h3→) 39...♖xd3! 40.♕xd3 ♗xc5+ 41.♔h1 ♘h5→ enables Black to organize a deadly attack against the white king with the help of sacrificing twice the exchange.

37...♘h5

The sacrifice 37...♖xe3? does not work anymore, because after 38.♗xe3 ♖xe3 39.♖b7 ♖a3 (39...♕g3 40.♕xc6 ♖xf3 41.♕e6+ ♔h7 42.♕f7+–) 40.♖xc7 ♖xa6 41.♘d3± only White has winning chances.

38.♕d3 ♘g3 39.♖fb1 ♕d7 40.♕g6 ♕f5!

It is now useless for Black to sacrifice the exchange. First of all White can guarantee himself a draw after: 40...♖xe3 41.♗xe3 ♖xe3 42.♘g4 ♖e6 43.♘h6+ ♔h8 44.♘f7=, but he can also try to play for a win after 42.♖b8!∞.



41.♕xf5

After 41.♕xc6 ♘e2+! 42.♔f1 (42.♖xe2? ♕xb1+ 43.♔h2 ♕b7∓) 42...♘g3+ 43.♔g1 (43.♔e1? ♖xe3+ 44.♗xe3 ♖xe3+ 45.♔d1 ♘e2 46.♔d2 ♕e5–+) 43...♘e2= the game would have probably ended in a draw by a repetition of moves.

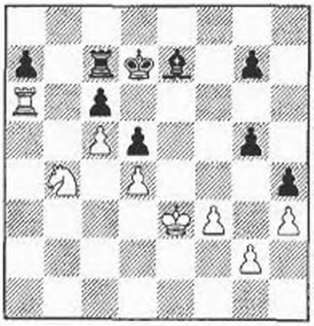
41...♘xf5 42.♘g4 ♘xd4

After the exchange sacrifice 42...♖xe3 43.♗xe3 ♘xe3 44.♖b8! (it is weaker for White to play 44.♘xe3 ♗xc5 45.♖b8 ♗xe3+ 46.♔f1 ♖xb8 47.♖xb8+ ♔f7 48.♖b7+ ♔f6 49.♖c7 c5∓, because Black's passed pawns might become really dangerous then) 44...♖xb8 45.♖xb8 ♘xg4 46.hxg4 ♔f7 47.♖c8 ♗xc5+ 48.♔f1± White's prospects are at least equal.

43.exd4 ♖c7 44.♔f2 ♔h7 45.♖a1 ♖e6

It becomes clear now that neither side can improve his position substantially.

46.♖e2 ♖xe2+ 47.♔xe2 ♗e7 48.♔d3 ♗f6 49.♖a6 ♔g6 50.♘e3 ♔f7 51.♘c2 ♔e6 52.♘b4 ♔d7 53.♔e3 ♗e7



54.f4

It was much more natural for White to continue with 54. ♔d3= and just do nothing. Black's bishop becomes a bit more active after the move in the game.

54...gxf4+ 55.♔xf4 ♗f6 56.♔e3 ♗g5+ 57.♔d3 ♗f6

Black's king and rook are bound to defend the c6-pawn and the bishop should take care of the white knight's ambition to penetrate the important e5-outpost. This is a typical dynamically balanced position.

58.♔c3 ♗g5 59.♔d3 ½ – ½

42 **B53**

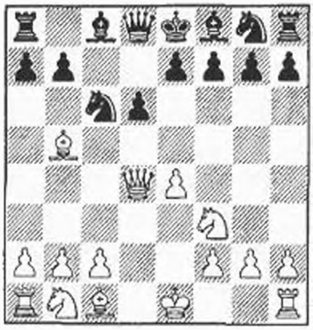
Timman – Topalov

Round 6 18.01

Notes by S. Shipov

The opponents in this exciting game were worthy of superb praises. The objective and regular result of this game would have been a draw, but the veteran surprisingly succumbed at the end.

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 d6 4.d4 cxd4 5.♕xd4



This is one of the most popular non-fashionable lines. The contemporary theoreticians do not deal with it often. You can simply sit down and enjoy playing chess.

5...♗d7 6.♗xc6 ♗xc6 7.♘c3 ♘f6 8.♗g5 e6 9.0–0–0 ♗e7 10.♖he1 0–0

This is the opening tabia of this variation.

11.♔b1 h6 12.♗h4

The opposite side castling guarantees a really intense fight.

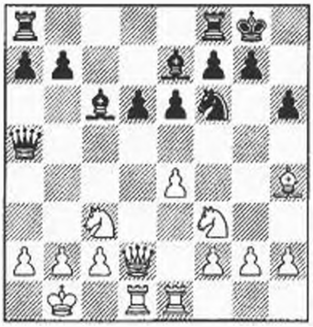
12...♕a5

In the game Svidler – Kasparov, Linares 1999, Black had a good position after 12...♖e8 13.♗g3 d5 14.e5 ♘e4 15.♘xe4 dxe4 16.♕xd8 ♖exd8 17.♘d4 ♗e8 18.c3 ♖ac8 19.♔c2 b5 20.♖xe4 b4

– and his initiative was compensating the sacrificed pawn.

13.♕d2

This move is with a brutal threat...



13...♕h5!?

This is a novelty. The other retreats of the black queen (to c5 or to a6) are also playable which has been proved numerous times in practice. The move 13...♖fd8? is countered by White with the typical combination 14.♘d5!, leading to a positional advantage for him and that has been played many times as well.

14.h3 g5!?

This is all so typical for Topalov...! This man is never afraid of anything or anybody...

15.♗g3

In case of 15.g4 ♕g6 16.♗g3 Black can take bravely on e4.

15...e5

Black managed to pack White's light pieces but at the expense of the creation of plenty of weaknesses!

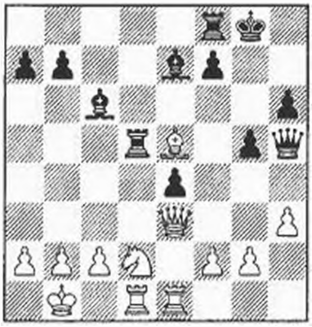
16.♕d3

It was worth for White to play in the spirit of the Ruy Lopez – 16.♘h2, followed by f2-f3 and ♘h2-g4.

16...♖ad8 17.♘d2

White is threatening to occupy the light squares with ♘d2-c4-e3, so Black is forced to open the position.

17...d5! 18.♗xe5 dxe4 19.♕e3 ♘d5 20.♘xd5 ♖xd5



This is one of the key-moments of the game.

21.♗d4

White can get the advantage with 21.g4! (it is important to cut off the e4-pawn from the rest of the pack) 21...♕g6 22.♗d4 ♗b4 23.c3 ♖fd8 and only now White can take bravely the juicy central pawn – 24.♘xe4. Black's initiative is bound to subside and a pawn is a pawn after all!

21...f5!

Black's central pawn mass seems to be really threatening and that is not an illusion at all!

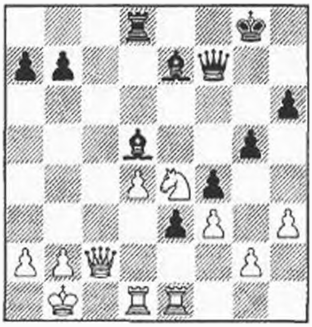
22.f3!

This is definitely the most principled decision. Jan accepts the challenge!

22...♖fd8 23.c3 ♖xd4!

This is a wonderful idea. Vesselin sacrifices for the third time in this tournament the exchange for initiative! He did that against Anand and Radjabov before this game. It is quite hard to remember a thing like that happening so regularly at such a high level of chess. We all know that Tigran Petrosian used to sacrifice often the exchange for purely positional reasons nevertheless that happened with him much more rarely than with Topalov. Three times in one tournament and every time the sacrifice was quite justified and absolutely logical.

24.cxd4 f4! 25.♕b3+ ♗d5 26.♕c2 e3 27.♘e4 ♕f7



Black's compensation for the exchange is evident – a powerful bishop-pair and a protected passed pawn on e3.

28.♘c3 ♗e6 29.d5

Jan gives away his central pawn quite deliberately in order to open files for his rooks.

29...♗f5 30.♘e4 ♖xd5 31.♖xd5 ♕xd5 32.♖d1 ♕e6 33.♔a1 h5

Black plans to make use of his pawn majority on the kingside. He should do that rather carefully though, because he might get checkmated with queens present on the board!

34.a3 ♔f7

This is a typical solidifying move. It is still premature for Black to play 34...g4 35.hxg4 hxg4 36.♕a4 and the line 36...b5 37.♕xb5 gxf3 38.gxf3 ♗xe4 39.fxe4 ♕xe4 40.♕h5! can be dangerous only for Black.

35.♕a4 ♗xe4

This is a crucial decision. Black exchanges his bishop but plans to create two connected passed pawns that are going to be extremely powerful!

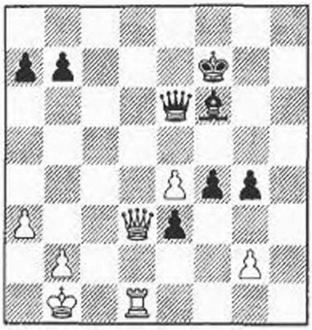
36.fxe4 ♗f6

In case of 36...g4 White has the resource 37.♕b5!.

37.♕c2 ♕c6 38.♔b1 g4

After 38...♕xc2+ 39.♔xc2 the white king manages to block Black's passed pawns triumphantly just in time.

39.hxg4 hxg4 40.♕d3! ♕e6



41.g3!?

This pawn move disrupts the coordination of the enemy forces. In the line 41.♖f1 ♔e7 capturing of the pawn leads to a draw by force: 42.♖xf4 ♕e5 (this is a double attack at b2 and f4) 43.♖xf6 ♕xf6 44.♕xe3 ♕f1+ 45.♔a2 ♕xg2 and White must give a perpetual in order to avoid the worst.

41...f3

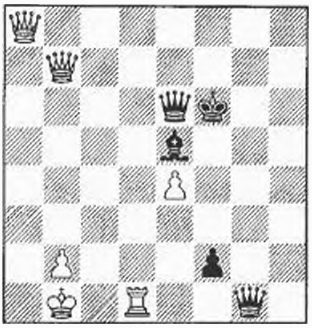
The platoon loses a soldier but goes on forward! The protected passed pawn on e3 will be immediately replaced by its neighbour. The line: 41...♕e5 42.♕d7+ ♔g6 43.♕xg4+ ♔f7 – was only good enough for a draw. The pawn on e4 is hanging as well as a checkmate on b2 and White must give a perpetual. The lines leading to a draw for both sides are simply discarded by the opponents in this game, since both Veselin and Jan are playing for a win!

42.♕xe3 ♗e5

Black is an exchange down but his positional advantages should not be underestimated. If he manages to capture the g3-pawn the couple of passed pawns will become unstoppable...

43.♕g5

This is the right path to the draw. As for the line: 43.♕xa7!? ♗xg3 44.♕xb7+ ♔f6 45.a4 ♗e5 46.a5 f2 47.a6 g3 (or 47...♗d4 48.a7 ♗xa7 49.♕xa7 ♕xe4+ 50.♔a1 ♕e2 with an unclear position) 48.a7 g2 49.a8♕ g1♕



you can say that it is not a normal human position at all... It looks like a loss for both sides, at least due to fear...! It is not clear how White can win outright and the quantity of queens on the board might tend to even multiply...

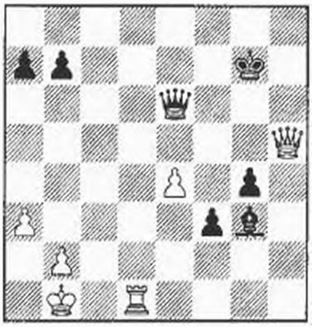
43...♗xg3 44.♕h5+ ♔g7

It is too dangerous for Black to try 44...♔f6 due to 45.♕h6+ ♔f7 46.♕h7+ ♔e8 47.♕xb7 ♗e5 48.♖d5!? a6 49.♖c5 ♗f6 50.♕b8+ ♔f7 51.♕f4 – and Black fails to push a pawn forward.

45.♕g5+ ♔f7

45...♕g6? 46.♖d7+.

46.♕h5+ ♔g7



White must comply now with a draw by a perpetual. Yes he must! But here unfortunately for him Jan decided to show some more fighting spirit...

47.♔a1

After 47.♖h1 ♕xe4+ 48.♔a1 f2 White still has a perpetual but there is no checkmate, for example: 49.♕h8+ ♔f7 50.♖h7+ ♔e6 51.♕c8+ ♔d5! 52.♕xb7+ ♔d4 53.♖d7+ ♔e3 54.♕b3+ ♔e2 (54...♔f4 55.♕f7+) 55.♕d1+ ♔e3 56.♕b3+ ♔e2 57.♕d1+ ♔e3 – that is it – a draw by a perpetual.

47...f2!

This pawn needs just one more step forward...

48.♕g5+ ♔f7 49.♕h5+ ♔g7

It was still not too late to agree to a draw, since White had a perpetual, but he was like obsessed and could not stop himself...

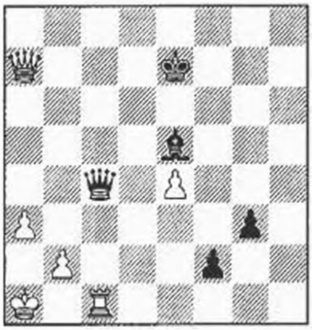
50.♖h1 ♗e5 51.♕h7+ ♔f8 52.♕xb7 g3! 53.♖c1

White preserved some chances to save the game after: 53.♖d1 ♕d6 54.♕c8+ ♔e7 55.♕b7+ ♕c7 56.♕b4+.

53...♕c4!

Now you can see the power of the passed f2-pawn! It is now ready to replace the already tired black queen capturing the white rook in the process.

54.♕a8+ ♔e7 55.♕xa7+



55...♗c7! 0–1

White's checks are over and there is no defence against f2-f1♕. Accordingly Timman resigned. This was one more disaster for the great master, but you should know that I started respecting him even more after that game! Despite his mature years Jan still avoids the simple and reliable way of playing chess and fights bravely and enterprisingly against the young generation. He is far from being always successful but he keeps them tense. He preserves his own fighting spirit and remains forever young...!

43 B32

Anand – Ponomariov

Round 7 19.01

Notes by M. Notkin

This was Anand's easiest win of the tournament. However, the seeming ease with which Anand won was the result of his strong play at the end of the opening (11.a3, 13.c3, 14.♘c4). At the same time, this game underlines Ponomariov's poor form at Wijk aan Zee.

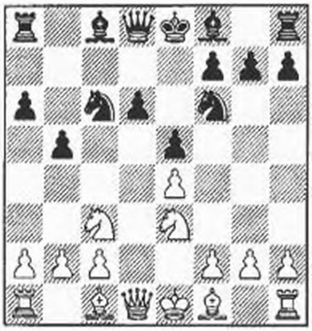
1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 e5 5.♘b5 d6 6.♘1c3 a6 7.♘a3 ♘f6

For some reason Ruslan rejects the move 7...b5.

8.♘c4

In the overwhelming majority of cases White plays 8.♗g5, entering the main variations of the Sveshnikov - Timoschenko system. The text-move gives a different character to the game.

8...b5 9.♘e3



9...b4?!

Ruslan makes up his mind to grab the e4-pawn. This position first occurred in 1941 in one of A. Alekhine's games. His opponent, Galindo, chose 9...♗e6 and easily drew. At Wijk aan Zee (3rd round) 2003 Ponomariov had the chance to witness the game Ivanchuk vs. Shirov, in which Ivanchuk also did not take the pawn, playing instead 9...♗e7.

10.♘cd5 ♘xe4 11.a3 bxa3

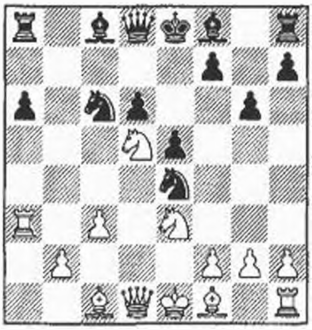
Interesting is 11...b3!? in order to acquire the d4-square for the knight after 12.cxb3.

12.♖xa3 g6?!

It was time to speed up development by playing 12...♗b7 or 12...♗e7

13.c3!

14.♕a4 is now a threat.



13...♗d7?

On 13...♗b7 White plays 14.♕f3 f5 15.♘xf5! and bad is 15...gxf5 16.♕h5+ ♔d7 17.♕xf5+ ♔e8 18.♕xe4. On 13...♘c5 of course, comes 14.b4 and 15.b5. In case of 13...f5 the move 14.b4 looks good here, too. The text-move, however, has considerable drawbacks. 13...f5 was the least of all the evils.

14.♘c4!

Anand does not need to take the a6-pawn for the time being. With the text-move White aims at b6 and d6. Black has unsolvable problems with his development.

14...♖b8 15.♗e3 f5 16.♗b6 ♖xb6

In case of 16...♕h4 White replies 17.g3! ♘xg3 18.fxg3 ♕e4+ 19.♔f2 ♕xh1 20.♘f6+ with a winning position.

17.♘cxb6 ♗h6 18.♗d3

The possible check on d2 does not bother Anand.

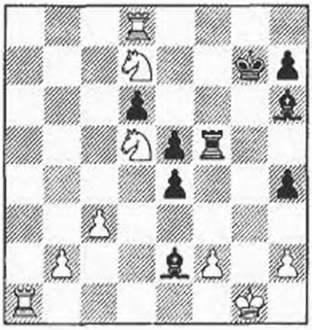
18...0–0

18...♗d2+ 19.♔f1 ♗g5 20.h4 ♗xh4 (20...♗e7 21.h5+–) 21.♗xe4 fxe4 22.♘xd7 and the h4-bishop is lost.

19.♗xe4 fxe4 20.0–0 ♗e6 21.♖xa6 ♕h4 22.♕e2 ♘d8 23.♖a8

The game comes to its end. Ruslan prolongs the inevitable as much as possible.

23...♔g7 24.g3 ♗g4 25.gxh4 ♗xe2 26.♖fa1 g5 27.♘d7 ♖f5 28.♖xd8 gxh4



The last hope. There is a threat of mate in two moves.

29.♖g8+! ♔f7

29...♔xg8 30.♘e7+

30.♖a7 ♖f3 31.♘7f6+ ♔e6 32.♖c7+ ♔f5 33.♘g4 ♗d2 34.♘ge3+ 1–0

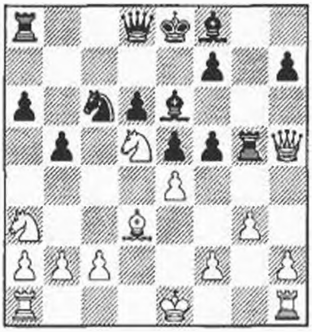
44 **B33**

Grischuk – Krasenkow

Round 7 19.01

Notes by N. Vlassov

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 ♘c6 6.♘db5 d6 7.♗f4 e5 8.♗g5 a6 9.♘a3 b5 10.♗xf6 gxf6 11.♘d5 f5 12.♗d3 ♗e6 13.♕h5 ♖g8 14.g3 ♖g5



This is a well-known position of the Cheljabinsk variation, quite fashionable at the world's top-level.

15.♕d1

It is possible for White to play here 15.♕xh7, but he should be careful about his queen: 15...♖c8 16.c3 ♖g6 17.♕h5 fxe4 18.♗xe4 ♗g4 19.♕h8?? (White must exchange his queen now with 19.♕h4, or sacrifice it with: 19.♗xg6!? ♗xh5 20.♗xh5), but not lose it like that after: 19...♖h6 20.♕g8 ♗e6 and 0–1 Voitsekhovsky – Filippov, Sochi 1997.

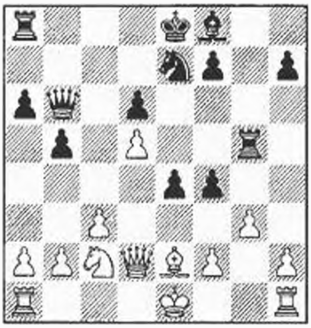
15...♗xd5 16.exd5 ♘e7 17.c3 ♕b6

Black has a good position but he is really unlucky. Black used to play here 17...e4, and GM A. Bezgodov achieved an advantage with White after 18.f4!?. Later Leko and Lautier tried 17...♗h6, but lost their games.

18.♘c2 e4

Black can play here a useful move 18...♖c8 if he wants to refrain from forced lines. It has some drawbacks too because the a6-pawn might be hanging in some lines.

19.♗e2 f4 20.♕d2!



20...♖xd5

It is too risky for Black to play 20...e3?! 21.fxe3 ♖xd5 (21...fxg3? 22.hxg3 b4 23.e4! ♖xg3 24.♕f4±. The white king will feel quite comfortable on d2, while his black counterpart will be subjected to an assault along the f-file.) 22.♘d4 fxe3 23.♕xe3 ♗g7 24.♖d1 with an edge for White (White risks too much with 24.0–0–0 b4 25.♖he1 ♖a7 and Black has an excellent counterplay, but not 25...bxc3?? 26.♗b5!+–). It was quite interesting for Black to try 20...♖e5, with the idea to capture on d5 with the knight. Black can answer then 21.gxf4 with 21...♗h6 with a good game.

21.♕xf4 ♖e5

In case of 21...♖f5 22.♕e3 ♕xe3 23.♘xe3 (23.fxe3!?) 23...♖c5 24.a4, White remains with an edge in the endgame and Black's counterplay is nowhere to be seen.

22.0–0 ♗g7 23.♔h1

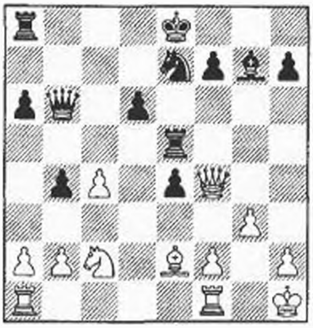
White is planning f2–f3.

23...b4!?

Black is trying to distract White from pursuing his natural plan, but quite unnecessarily at that. Well, in case of 23...d5 24.f3 Black had certain difficulties, but after 23...♖c8 24.f3 e3 White was going to have some real problems to cope with the annoying e3-pawn, for example: 25.♕g4 (or 25.♖ad1 ♔f8 26.♖d3 ♖c4) 25...♔f8 26.f4 ♖d5 27.♖ad1 ♖d2! 28.♖xd2 exd2 29.♖d1 ♗xc3! 30.bxc3 ♖xc3 31.♘b4 ♕f2 32. ♘d3 ♕e3 and Black's d2-pawn is an excellent compensation for the piece.

24.c4

White has nothing much after 24.cxb4 d5 or 24.♘e3 d5, so Grischuk is trying to prevent the move d6–d5.



24...d5!

In spite of all ...!

25.♖ad1 ♖d8

It is interesting but still too risky for Black to play 25...b3!? 26.axb3 ♕xb3 27.♘e3! (After 27.♘d4 ♕xb2 28.cxd5 ♘xd5 29.♕g4 ♔f8 30.♘f5 ♗h8! 31.♗c4 ♘f6 32.♕f4 ♕c3 Black has good chances to neutralize White's initiative. It is worse for Black to play 30...♗f6 31.♗c4!± because he must preserve the f6–square for his knight.) and Black is losing material, because 27...♖d8 is too bad for Black after 28.cxd5 ♘xd5 29.♖xd5!+–.

26.cxd5 ♘xd5 27.♕h4

The other retreats of the queen are not very promising either: 27.♕d2 a5; or 27.♕g4 ♔f8.

27...♕g6 28.♘e3!?

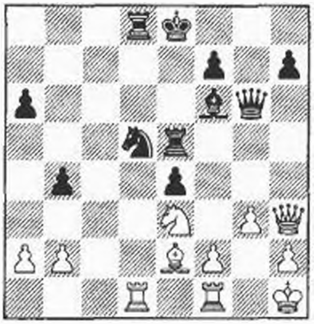
After 28.f4 exf3 29.♗d3 Black should try to do his best in order to exchange queens and if he succeeds he equalizes, for example 29...f5 30.♖xf3 ♕g4!

28...♗f6 29.♕h3

(diagram)

29...♘xe3?

This was a grave imprecision by Black. After 29...♔f8 30.♗xa6 ♘xe3 31.fxe3 ♖xd1 32.♖xd1 White's chances to press his advantage home were minute.



30.♖xd8+ ♗xd8 31.fxe3±

Black's main problem now is to find a safe haven for his king.

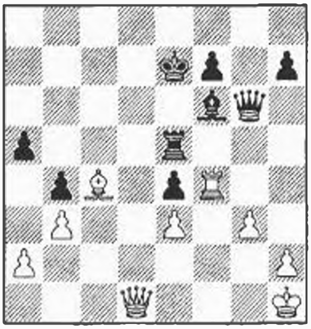
31...♖c5

31...♔f8 32.♕c8±.

32.b3

White now ensures the c4–square for his bishop, so all has forces are excellently placed.

32...a5 33.♗c4 ♗f6 34.♖f4 ♔e7 35.♕f1 ♖e5 36.♕d1



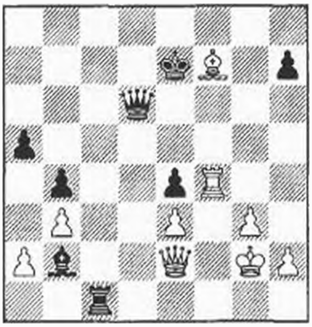
36...♖c5?!

Black loses a pawn after that move, but he would not fare any better after the other moves too: 36...h5 37.♕d4 ♔f8 38.♕d6+ ♔g7 39.♗d5± planning ♕c6; 36...♔f8 37.h4!

37.♗d5! ♗b2 38.♗xf7 ♕d6 39.♕e2?!

White would have been more convincing after 39.♕g4! ♖c1+ 40.♔g2 ♖c2+ 41.♔h3 ♕h6+ 42.♗h5 ♕e6 43.♖f5! ♗f6 44.♖xa5 ♕xg4+ 45.♗xg4+−.

39...♖c1+ 40.♔g2



40...♗e5?

White's task would have been much harder after 40...♕d1 41.♕b5 (41.♕xd1 ♖xd1±; 41.♕a6 ♖c2+ 42.♔h3 ♕d7+ 43.g4 ♗e5) 41...♖c2+ 42.♔h3 ♕d7+ 43.♕xd7+ ♔xd744.♖xe4±.

41.♖f5+−

Black is totally helpless now.

41...♗f6 42.♗d5 ♕d7 43.♕h5 ♖c2+ 44.♔f1 ♖c1+ 45.♔e2 ♔d8 46.♖xf6 ♕b5+ 47.♔d2 ♕c5 48.♖d6+ 1–0

45 **B33**

Ju.Polgar – Kramnik

Round 7 19.01

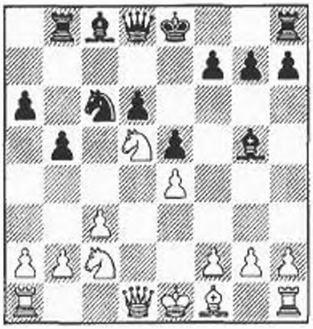
1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 e5 6.♘db5 d6 7.♗g5 a6 8.♘a3 b5 9.♘d5

The line 9.♗xf6 gxf6 10.♘d5 f5∞ leads to much more complex positions.

9...♗e7 10.♗xf6 ♗xf6 11.c3 ♖b8

Black is in a hurry to play ♖b8 (in order to protect his queenside from the effects of the early a2-a4 for White) and ♗g5 (in order to prepare the manoeuvre ♘e7) delaying castling for a while. In case of 11...0–0, after 12.♘c2 ♖b8 (12...♗g5 13.a4!?) 13.h4!? White fails to play both thematic moves.

12.♘c2 ♗g5



13.a3

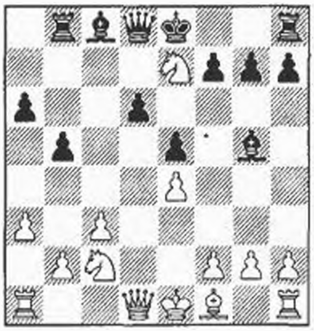
It is more principled for White to play 13.a4, but after 13...bxa4 14.♘cb4 ♘xb4 15.♘xb4 ♗d7 (but not 15...♗b7? because of 16.♕xa4±) 16.♗xa6 ♕a5!? (16...0–0 17.0–0 ♗e7 18.♕e2 ♔h8 19.♖ad1 g6 20.♔h1 ♕e8 21.♕e3 f5 22.exf5 gxf5 23.f4± Jansa – Milicevic, Kragujevac 1984) 17.♕xd6 ♖b6 18.♕d3 ♗e7 19.♘d5 ♖xb2 20.0–0 ♕c5 21.♖ab1 ♖xb1 22.♖xb1 0–0 23.♗b5 ♗e8 24.♗xe8 ♖xe8= as it was played in the game Leko – Illescas Cordoba, Madrid 1998, Black's task to make a draw does not seem to be difficult.

13...♘e7

Black usually does not let the second white knight to d5 and prefers 13...a5. His queenside is weakened a bit indeed, but the practice shows that to be insignificant. For example after 14.♗d3 ♘e7 15.♘xe7 ♕xe7 (capturing with the bishop only hampers the coordination of the black pieces and after 15...♗xe7 16.♕e2 ♗d7 17.0–0 0–0 18.b4 g6 19.c4 bxc4 20.♗xc4± White achieved some advantage in the game Zapata – Lopez, Cartagena de Indias 2001.) 16.♕e2 0–0 17.0–0 ♗d7 18.b4 ♖fc8 (White is also slightly better after 18...axb4 19.♘xb4 ♖fc8 20.c4 bxc4 21.♗xc4 ♗e6 22.♗d5± as in the game Kasparov – Kramnik, Frankfurt 2000, and obviously Judit Polgar had that game in mind during her preparation.) 19.bxa5 ♕d8 20.♘b4 ♕xa5 21.c4 bxc4 22.♗xc4 g6 23.♖fd1 ♗a4 24.♖db1 and White agreed to a draw in the game Dominguez – Gongora, Cuba 2002.

14.♘xe7

White's other possibility is 14.♘cb4 ♘xd5 and then 15.♕xd5!? (15.exd5 ♕b6 16.a4 0–0 17.axb5 axb5 18.g3 e4 19.♗g2 ♗d7 20.0–0 e3= Lanka – Jelen, Ljubljana 1994. In case of 15.♘xd5 with the idea to bring the white bishop to the a2-g8 diagonal with ♗d3-c2-b3, Black has 15...♗e6! 16.♗d3 ♗xd5 17.exd5 0–0= with equality) 15...♗b7 16.♕d3 0–0 17.♗e2 f5 18.♗f3∞ and the position is very complex with mutual chances.



14...♕xe7

14...♗xe7?! is clearly worse, at least because of 15.♘b4 ♕b6 16.a4↑.

15.♘b4

It is premature for White to play 15.a4 due to 15...♕b7!⇄.

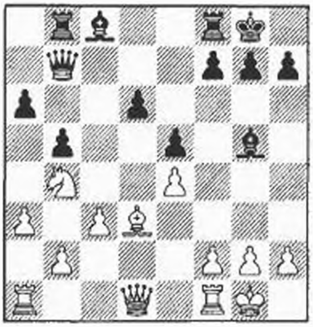
15...♕d7

The complications after 15...♕b7 16.♕xd6!? ♕xe4+ 17.♗e2 ♕xg2 (17...♖b7 18.f3!±) 18.♖f1 ♖b7 19.♘xa6 ♖d7 20.♗xb5 ♕e4+ 21.♔d1∞ were not very attractive to Kramnik, because he would have to fight for a draw then.

16.♗d3

It is not very good for White to play 16.a4?! in view of 16...a5 17.♘d5 (after 17.♗xb5 ♖xb5 18.axb5 axb4∓ White loses material) 17...bxa4 18.♕c2 (in case of 18.♕xa4 ♕xa4 19.♖xa4 ♖xb2 20.♖xa5 ♖b1∓ the pin along the 1st rank is quite annoying for White) 18...0–0∓ (recommended by Rogozenko).

16...0–0 17.0–0 ♕b7



18.a4

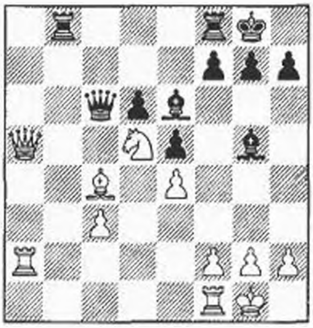
It was safer for White to play 18.♗c2= with the idea to bring the bishop to the a2-g8 diagonal.

18...a5 19.♘d5 bxa4 20.♕xa4 ♗e6 21.♗c4

Judit Polgar is gradually losing her orientation in this game. She could have still secured the draw with: 21.♕xa5 ♗xd5 22.exd5 ♕xb2 23.♕c7! and Black has to comply with the exchange of the pawns on d6 and c3, because after 23...♕b6 (23...♖fd8??

24.♖ab1+–) 24.♕xb6 ♖xb6 25.♖fb1= there is nothing to play for.

21...♕xb2 22.♖a2 ♕b7 23.♕xa5 ♕c6



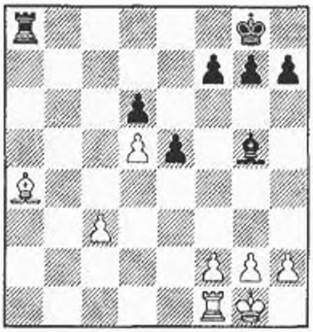
24.♖a4?!

This is a serious mistake. After 24.♕a6 ♖fc8 25.♕xc6 ♖xc6 26.♖a4, White should not be afraid even to lose the c3-pawn, because Black would hardly repel the white bishop away from the a2-g8 diagonal.

24...♖a8!

The white bishop is now forced to abandon the strategically important diagonal.

25.♕b5 ♕xb5 26.♗xb5 ♖xa4 27.♗xa4 ♗xd5 28.exd5 ♖a8∓



The endgame seems to be an easy draw, because of the opposite-coloured bishops and the reduced material. This is absolutely not true, however. The point is that after the manoeuvre of the black bishop to the a7-g1 diagonal it will exert a powerful pressure against White's kingside and that will be very annoying for White together with the eventual passed e-pawn. White does not have any good diagonal for the bishop, because the d5-pawn stands in the way.

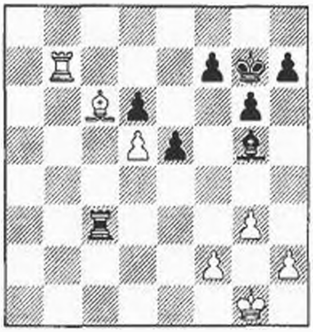
29.♖b1 g6 30.♗c6 ♖a3 31.c4 ♖c3 32.g3!?

Judit decided to part with one of her pawns. In case of 32.♗b5 she was obviously afraid of 32...e4!? and after 33.g3 ♖c2 34.♔f1 f5, Black had an easy plan to improve the position with ♗f6-d4∓.

32...♖xc4

Black needs to waste some tempi in order to capture the pawn, because the immediate 32...e4 was not good because of 33.♖b8+ ♔g7 34.♖b7 ♖xc4 35.♗e8=.

33.♖b8+ ♔g7 34.♖b7 ♖c3



35.♗e8

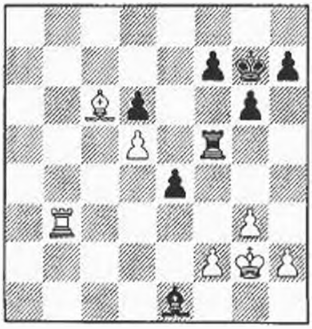
The move 35.♖d7?! is not good for White in view of 35...e4! 36.♖xd6 ♖c1+ 37.♔g2 ♖c2 38.♔f1 ♗e7 39.♖d7 ♗c5∓ and White loses the f2-pawn.

35...♖f3 36.♗a4 ♖a3 37.♗e8 ♖f3

38.♗a4 e4 39.♔g2 ♖a3 40.♗e8 ♖f3 41.♗a4 ♗d2 42.♖b3

After 42.♖e7 ♗e1 43.♖xe4 ♖xf2+ 44.♔h3 ♗c3∓, Black's rook is very powerful along the second rank.

42...♖f5 43.♗c6 ♗e1



44.♖b2?!

Most probably White had to enter the line 44.♖e3!? ♗xf2 (Black's attempt to capture a pawn and establish his rook along the second rank with 44...♖xf2+?? would have ended in a disaster, since after 45.♔g1± he would have lost a piece) 45.♖xe4 ♗c5 46.♖e2∓, because after just a few moves (see the notes to Black's move 53), White would only dream about a possibility like that.

44...♗c3 45.♖e2 ♗d4 46.♗d7

The appropriate moment for the exchange of the f2-pawn for the black e4-pawn has long gone. Now after 46.♖xe4 ♖xf2+ 47.♔h3 ♗e5∓ the black rook occupies the 2nd rank.

46...♖e5!∓

The exchange of the pawns with 46...♖xd5 47.♖xe4= is not in favour of Black.

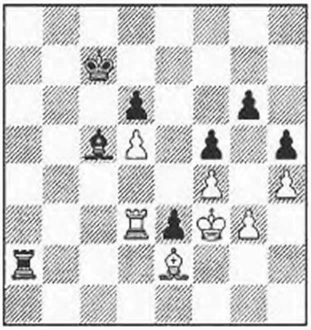
47.♗c6 ♖e7 48.♖a2 ♗c5 49.♖e2 h5 50.h4 ♔f6 51.♖a2 ♖e5 52.♖e2 ♔g7 53.f4 ♖e7!

This decision is again absolutely correct. After 53...exf3+ 54.♔xf3 ♖f5+ 55.♔g2∓ White's defence is much easier.

54.♖a2 ♔f6 55.♔f1 ♔f5 56.♔g2 ♔g4 57.♗a4 ♖b7 58.♗d1+ ♔f5 59.♖e2 e3 60.♔f3 ♔f6 61.♖c2 ♖b4 62.♗e2 ♔g7 63.♖c1 ♖b2 64.♖d1 ♔f6 65.♖d3 ♔e7 66.♖d1 ♔d8 67.♖a1 ♔d7 68.♖d1 ♖a2 69.♗b5+ ♔c7 70.♗e2 f5 71.♖d3?!

This is one more mistake by White leading already to a lost position. The chances to save the game were in the line: 71.♖b1 ♖d2 72.♖d1 ♔b6 73.♖b1+ and if 73...♔a5, then after 74.♖b8 ♖xd5 75.♖g8 ♖d2 76.♖xg6 d5 77.♖g5 d4 78.♖xf5 ♔b6 (78...♔b4 79.♖d5=) 79.♖f6+! (79.♖d5 for White is not so good, since after 79...♔c6 80.♖d8 ♗b6−+ the White rook fails to hold the d-file) 79...♔c7 80.♖f5 ♔c6 81.♖f6+ ♗d6 81.♖f5∓ and White should be able to manage to sacrifice the bishop for Black's passed pawns.

71...♖d2!

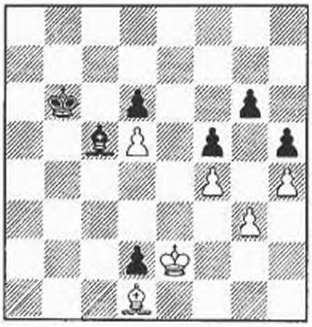


This is a critical position. Black has improved the placement of his pieces to a maximal degree and now forces White to go into a bishop and pawn endgame. This enables the black king to penetrate towards White's pawns via the queenside. It is worth mentioning that the white rook could not retreat from the d3-square, since White was losing the d5-pawn then. White had no other acceptable moves left, besides trading rooks, because of the zugzwang.

72.♖xd2

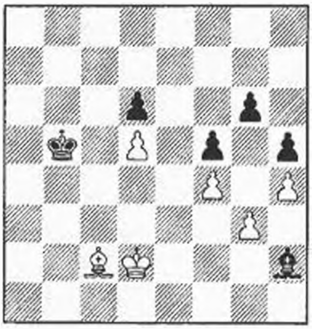
Black's passed pawn now is on the d-file and only one square away from promotion. White must control the d1-square with the bishop as well as with the king in the immediate future in order to block it reliably.

72...exd2 73.♗d1 ♔b6 74.♔e2



74...♔a5?!

Kramnik had only less than 10 minutes left on his clock at that moment and he made a mistake that enabled White to save the game at the end. It is possible to understand his mistake from the point of view of the human players. He moves towards the d2-pawn with his king along the dark squares in order to avoid surprises, but all rules have exceptions... It was absolutely necessary to place the black king on a light square at that moment and to play 74...♔b5!. The point is that the black king then will be one square closer to the d5-pawn, which is an important target for him, in comparison to the game. You can find a detailed analysis of that endgame at the site www.gmchess.com. We are only going to give you some basic lines to be able to understand the evaluation of that exciting endgame. After 74...♔b5! 75.♗c2 (75.♗b3 ♗g1 76.♗d1 ♔b4 77.♗c2 ♗h2 78.♔f2 ♔c3 79.♗a4 ♔b2–+; 75.♔xd2 ♗f2 76.♗e2+ ♔c5 77.♗d1 ♔b4! 78.♗e2 ♗xg3 79.♔e3 ♗xh4 80.♗a6 ♔c5 81.♗b7 ♗f6–+) we only have to see what will happen if White tries to send his bishop into the enemy camp with **A)** 77.♗d3+, or attempts to organize a pawn break **B)** 77.g4, similar to what happened in the game.



A) 77.♗d3+ ♔c5 78.♔e3 (in case of 78.♗c2 Black plays 78...♔b4!? 79.♗d3 ♗xg3 80.♔e3 ♔a5–+ and does not let the white bishop in his camp) 78.♔e3 ♗xg3 79.♗a6 ♗xh4 (79...♔xd5 80.♗c8=) 80.♗c8 Black now must be careful about the fate of his pawns on the kingside – 80...♗f6! (80...♔xd5 81.♗d7 ♗e1 82.♗e8 ♔e6 83.♗xg6 h4 84.♗h7 h3 85.♗g8+ ♔f6 86.♗d5=) 81.♗e6 h4 82.♗f7 g5 (after 83.♗e6 ♗d4+ 84.♔f3 g4+ 85.♔g2 g3 86.♔f3 ♗f6 87.♔g2 ♔d4 88.♔f3 ♗e7 89.♗f7 ♗f8 90.♗e6 ♗h6! White is in a zugzwang and must allow the formation of a third passed pawn for Black, since 91.♗f7 does not work because of 91...♗xf4!−+) 83.fxg5 83...♗xg5+ 84.♔f3 ♔d4 85.♗e6 ♔e5 86.♗g8 ♗f4 87.♔g2 ♗g3 88.♔f3 f4 89.♗e6 ♔d4 90.♔g2 (White now must surrender the e4-square, because 90.♗f7 loses due to 90...h3 91.♗e6 h2 92.♔g2 f3+ 93.♔h1 f2 94.♗h3 ♔xd5−+) 90...♔e4 91.♔f1 f3 92.♔g1 ♔e3 93.♔f1 ♗e5 94.♗c8 ♔f4 95.♔g1 (95.♔f2 ♗d4+ 96.♔f1 ♔g3 Δ97...h3−+) 95...♔g3 96.♗e6 ♗d4+ (Black must play precisely, since after 96...h3 97.♔h1 ♔f2 98.♗xh3 ♔e1 99.♗f1= the game might end in a draw because of the stalemate) 97.♔h1 ♔f2 98.♗d7 ♔e1 99.♗b5 f2 100.♔g2 h3−+ and White has nothing to do against the march of the passed f- and h-pawns.

B) 77.g4 hxg4! (this is the simplest win although after 77...♗xf4+ 78.♔e2 hxg4 79.h5 gxh5 80.♗xf5 ♔c4 81.♗g6 h4 82.♗f5 g3 83.♔f3 ♗e5 84.♗e6 ♔d4! Black can exploit the zugzwang and exchange his h-pawn for the white d-pawn at some opportune moment) 78.♔e3 (White loses after 78.h5 g3 79.♗d3+ ♔c5 80.♗f1 gxh5 81.♗g2 ♔d4 82.♔e2 h4 83.♔d2 ♗g1−+ and the manoeuvre of the black bishop to the e3-square wins) 78...♔c4 (the black king manages to come closer to the white d5-pawn) 79.h5 gxh5 80.♗xf5 ♔xd5 81.♗g6 h4 82.♗f5 ♗g1+ 83.♔e2 g3 84.♔f3 ♗b6 85.♗h3 ♔d4 86.♔g4 ♗d8−+ and Black's three passed pawns are unstoppable.

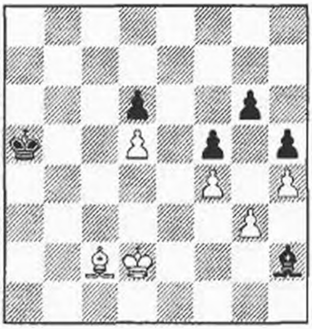
75.♗c2!

White plans to organize a pawn break g3-g4 on the kingside in order to get rid of the potentially weak pawns there with minimal losses.

75...♗g1

Black sends his bishop to h2 in order to start collecting White's pawns on the kingside. It is already too late to correct his mistake on the previous move. After 75...♔b4 76.♔xd2 (White should not remain passive, because after 76.♗d1 ♗g1 77.♗c2 ♗h2 78.♔f2 ♔c3 79.♗a4 ♔b2−+ Black wins easily, since White's defence gets stretched) 76...♗f2 77.g4 hxg4 78.h5 gxh5 79.♗xf5 ♔c5 80.♔e2 ♗d4 (the line 80...♗g1 81.♗g6 h4 82.♗f5 g3 83.♗e6 ♔d4 84.♔f3= leads to the same consequences) 81.♗e6 ♗f6 82.♗f7 h4 83.♗e6 g3 84.♔f3 ♔d4 85.♗f7 ♗d8 86.♗e6 ♗a5 87.♗f7 ♗e1 88.♗e6 ♗f2 and despite the fact that White is in a zugzwang, he manages to hold the position thanks to the passed f-pawn. He goes on playing 89.♗h3! (it is not possible to manoeuvre with the bishop along the a2-g8 diagonal anymore, since after 89.♗f7 and 89...h3 90.♗e6 h2 91.♔g2 ♔e4 92.f5 h1♕+ 93.♔xh1 ♔f3−+ Black wins and if 89.f5 then 89...♔e5 90.♔g2 ♗b6 91.♔f3 ♗d8 92.♔g2 ♔f4−+ and White must part with the f-pawn in order to reestablish the control along the c8-h3 diagonal and that is unacceptable for him. The other possibility: 89.♔g2 ♔e4 90.f5 ♔e5−+ loses too) 89...♔xd5 90.♔g4 ♔c5 91.♗g2 d5 92.♔xh4 d4 93.♔g4 d3 94.♔f3 d2 95.♔e2 ♗e3 96.f5 ♔d6 97.♗h3 ♔e5 98.♔d1= and White manages to defend successfully manoeuvreing with the king on the d1 and e2-squares.

76.♔xd2 ♗h2



77.g4!

This pawn-break is the essence of White's defensive idea.

77...♗xf4+

We must also mention that after 77...hxg4 78.♔e3 (the pawn race after 78.h5 g3 79.h6 g2 80.h7 g1♕ 81.h8♕ ♗xf4+, leads to a position in which as a result of: 82.♔d3 ♕f1 83.♔c3 ♕a1−+ White loses the queen at the end, or after: 82.♔e2 ♕e3+ 83.♔f1 ♕c1−+ he loses a piece) 78.♔e3 78...♗g1+ 79.♔e2 ♔b4 80.h5 gxh5 81.♗xf5 ♔c4 82.♗g6 h4 83.♗f5 g3 84.♗e6 ♔d4 85.♔f3 ♗f2 we reach once again a position from the line that we saw in our notes to Black's move 75 and as we mentioned there, after 86.♗h3! ♔xd5 87.♔g4 ♔e4 88.♗g2+ ♔d4 89.♔xh4 d5 90.♔g4= White can make a draw.

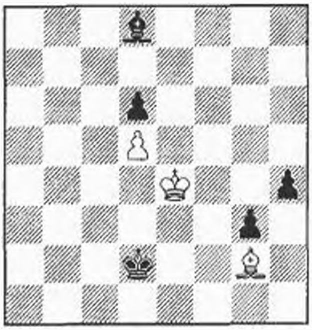
78.♔e2 hxg4 79.h5 gxh5 80.♗xf5 ♔b4 81.♗g6 h4 82.♗f5 g3 83.♔f3 ♔c4 84.♗h3 ♗e5 85.♔e4!

White would have never saved that endgame with a black king on the d4-square.

85...♗f6 86.♗f1+ ♔c3 87.♗g2

The white king defends the d5-pawn now and the bishop has occupied an ideal defensive posture on the g2-square.

87...♔c4 88.♗f1+ ♔c5 89.♗g2 ♗e7 90.♗f1 ♗d8 91.♗g2 ♔c4 92.♗f1+ ♔c3 93.♗g2 ♔d2



94.♔f3!

White has countered Black's attempt to attack the white bishop on g2 with his king with a transfer of his king to the h3-square and that practically forces the draw.

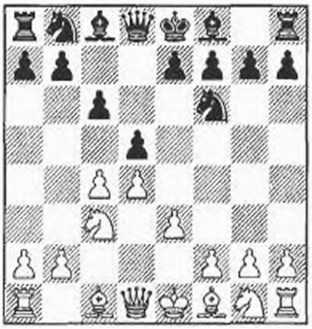
94...♔d3 95.♔g4 ♔e3 96.♔h3 ♗f6 97.♗h1 ½ – ½

46 **D10**

Radjabov – Ivanchuk

Round 7 19.01

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.e3



4...a6

This move is a cry of fashion. Some 20 years ago Black used to play more often the Schlechter variation – 4...g6 5.♘f3 ♗g7, or the Meran – 4...e6 5.♘f3 ♘bd7. In order to understand the genesis of the appearance of the line 4...a6, we should mention that after 4...♗f5 5.cxd5! (the immediate 5.♕b3 can be countered with 5...♕b6= by Black) 5...cxd5 6.♕b3 Black has problems to defend his queenside.

5.♘f3 b5 6.b3

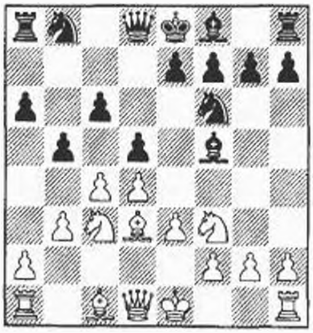
Now, after the b3-square has been occupied by a white pawn, Black can develop his light-squared bishop.

6...♗f5

The attractive 6...♗g4!? is much more popular.

7.♗d3

White can hardly question Black's idea in that fashion. The move 7.♘e5!? is much more principled. The point is that after 7...e6 (7...h6 8.g4 ♗h7 9.♗g2 e6 10.0–0 ♗e7 11.f4↑ Kramnik – Bareev, Monaco 2003) and 8.g4 (8.♗d2 ♘fd7 9.♘d3 ♗e7 10.♗e2 dxc4 11.bxc4 ♗xd3 12.♗xd3 ♘e5 13.♗e2 ♘xc4 14.♗xc4 bxc4 15.♕a4 0–0 16.♕xc4 c5= Ivanchuk – Kasparov, Prague (active, m/2)) 8...♗g6 9.h4, White exploits the exposed placement of Black's light-squared bishop and starts some kingside actions. As a result of 9...♘e4 (in case of 9...♗b4 10.♗d2 ♗xc3 11.♗xc3 ♘e4 12.♗b4 f6 13.h5 fxe5 14.hxg6 ♕f6 15.f3 ♘g5 16.♗e2↑ as it was played in the game Galliamova – Crepan, Pula 1997, White has a powerful pair of bishops and an overwhelming initiative) 10.♘xe4 ♗xe4 11.f3 f6 12.fxe4!? (the complications after 12.♘xc6 ♘xc6 13.fxe4 dxe4 14.a3 ♗d6 15.♔f2 0–0 16.cxb5 axb5 17.♗xb5 ♘b4 18.♗c4 ♘d5 19.♕c2 f5∓ led to a better position for Black due to the exposed position of the white king in the game Avrukh – Bareev, Haifa (active) 2000) 12...fxe5 13.cxd5 cxd5 14.♗g2 dxe4 15.dxe5 ♗b4+ 16.♗d2 ♗xd2+ 17.♕xd2 ♕xd2+ 18.♔xd2 ♘c6 19.♗xe4 ♖d8+ 20.♔e2 ♘xe5 21.g5± and White had only a slight advantage in the endgame in Kiriakov – Stefansson, Santo Domingo 2003.



7...e6!?

This move is played with the idea to prevent White from playing e3-e4 in the nearest future. After the immediate exchange of the bishops 7...♗xd3 8.♕xd3 after 8...e6 9.0–0 ♘bd7 (in case of 9...♗e7, Black must consider 10.e4!?) 10.a3 ♗e7 11.e4 dxe4 12.♘xe4 0–0 13.♖d1 ♖c8 14.♗e3 ♘xe4 15.♕xe4 bxc4 16.bxc4 ♕a5 17.♕c2∞ Black had a quite satisfactory position in the game M. Roeder – Zagrebelny, Abu Dhabi 2000.

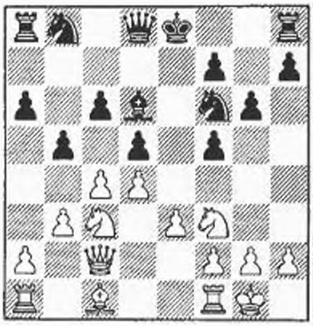
8.♗xf5

White's evident loss of time in the process of preparation of e3-e4 after: 8.0–0 ♗e7 9.♕e2 and 9...♗xd3 10.♕xd3 0–0 11.e4 b4 12.e5 bxc3 13.exf6 ♗xf6 14.♗a3 ♖e8 15.♕xc3 ♘d7 16.cxd5 cxd5 17.♖ac1 e5 18.dxe5 ♘xe5 19.♘xe5 ♗xe5 20.♕d2 d4= enabled Black to obtain a good position in the game Roeder – Saltaev, Belgium 2003.

8...exf5 9.0–0 ♗d6 10.♕c2

White has also tested 10.♕d3 g6 11.a4, and in the game Kasimdzhanov – Sakaev, Germany 2003, the grandmaster from St.Petersburg preferred: 11...dxc4!? 12.bxc4 b4 13.♘e2 ♘bd7 14.♗b2 0–0 15.♖fd1 ♕e7∞ creating a passed pawn on the queenside.

10...g6



11.♗d2

White has played before here 11.♘e2!? (with the idea to follow with ♗d2 and a4) 11...0–0 12.♗d2 and after the careless move 12...♘bd7?! (According to M.Dlugy it was better for Black to play 12...a5!? in order to be able to counter a2-a4 with b5-b4 at any moment.) White plays 13.a4! bxc4 14.bxc4 ♘e4 15.♖fb1 ♘df6 16.♗e1! ♖b8 17.a5! (with the idea ♕a4) 17...♗c7 18.♖c1! (White is planning 19.cxd5) 18...♖b7 (18...♖c8 19.♕d3!; 18...♗d6 19.♕a4!) 19.♕a4 ♖b2 20.♘f4! (Δ♘d3) 20...♗xf4 21.exf4 ♘g4 22.♖c2!± and White had the advantage in the game Dlugy – Khmelnitsky, USA 1991.

11...0–0 12.♖fc1 ♘bd7 13.cxd5

In case of 13.a4 White must consider the fact that after 13...dxc4 14.bxc4 b4 15.♘e2 a5∞ Black creates a passed pawn on the queenside.

13...cxd5 14.a4 b4 15.♘e2 ♖c8 16.♕d3 ♕b6=

Now it is evident that the simplifications are unavoidable.

17.♖c2 ♕b7 18.♖ac1 ♘b6 19.♘e5 ♖xc2 20.♖xc2 ♖c8 21.f3 ♘bd7 22.♘xd7 ½ – ½

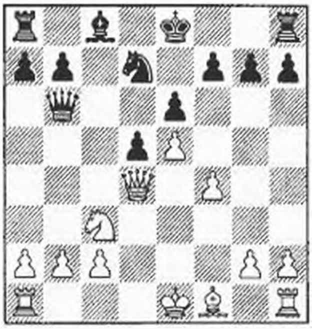
47 C11

Shirov – Bareev

Round 7 19.01

Notes by M. Notkin

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.e5 ♘fd7 5.f4 c5 6.♘f3 ♘c6 7.♗e3 cxd4 8.♘xd4 ♗c5 9.♕d2 ♗xd4 10.♗xd4 ♘xd4 11.♕xd4 ♕b6



12.♕d2!?

This line commonly leads to an ending with White's slight advantage after 12.♕xb6 ♘xb6 13.♘b5 or 12.♘b5 ♕xd4 13.♘xd4. But this type of positions suits Bareev much more than Shirov. I don't mean Shirov is less competent without queens, but in a double-edged middlegame with the initiative he surely feels right at home.

12...♕xb2

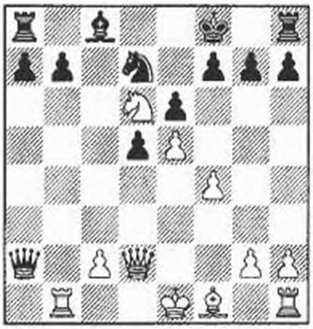
Such a brave man as Jan Timman didn't dare capture this pawn. His game against Kasparov (Horgen 1995) continued 12...♘c5 13.0–0–0 ♗d7 14.♕d4 a6 15.h4 0–0–0 16.♖h3 ♗c6 17.♘e2 ♔b8 18.♖c3 ♘a4 19.♕xb6 ♘xb6 and all in all they got the ending, similar to the one from the previous note.

13.♖b1 ♕a3 14.♘b5 ♕xa2

Bareev decides to suffer with two pawns in his pocket. The game Nielsen – Holst, Aars 1999 saw 14...♕c5 15.♘d6+ ♔e7 16.♖b5 ♕a3 17.c4 d4 18.♖b3 ♕c5 19.♘e4 ♕c6 20.♕b4+ ♔d8 21.♗d3 with full compensation for the pawn.

15.♘d6+ ♔f8

A few months later in Monte Carlo Bareev successfully tested 15...♔e7! against Almasi and Shirov.



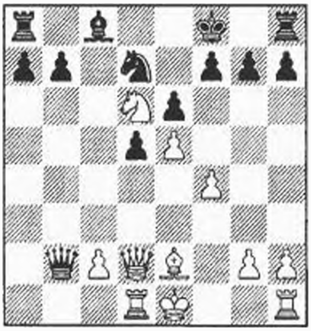
16.♖d1

Bad is 16.♕b4? a5. White's plan is simple – ♗e2, 0–0 followed by opening the f-file.

16...♕b2?!

16...b6 is worth trying. In case of 17.♕c3 ♘c5! (after 17...♕a5 18.♕xa5 bxa5 19.c4 White retains the initiative) 18.♘xc8 (18.♖a1 d4!) 18...d4! (18...♖xc8? 19.♖a1 d4 20.♕xc5+) 19.♕xd4 ♕a5+! 20.♔f2 ♖xc8 21.♖a1 ♕c3!. Amazingly Black emerges without serious losses though the endgame after 22.♕xc3 ♘e4+ 23.♔f3 ♘xc3 24.♖xa7 looks attractive for White.

17.♗e2



17...♕b6

In the event of 17...a5 18.0–0 ♕b4 White can choose between 19.c3 and 19.♕xb4 axb4 20.♖a1 ♖xa1 21.♖xa1 ♔e7 22.♖a8 ♘b6 23.♖a7 and it's not easy for Black to finish developing. The continuation 17...♔e7 18.0–0 ♕b6+ (18...♘c5? 19.♖b1 ♕a2 20.♖a1 ♕b2 21.♖fb1 and the queen is trapped) 19.♔h1 ♘c5 makes all White's dreams come true after 20.f5. The text move allows Shirov to attack Black's centre.

18.c4! d4

Naturally Black is ready to give one pawn back to exchange queens. 18...dxc4 is bad due to 19.♘xc8 ♖xc8 20.♕xd7; if 18...♘c5 then 19.cxd5 exd5 20.f5! (not 20.♕xd5 ♕b4+).

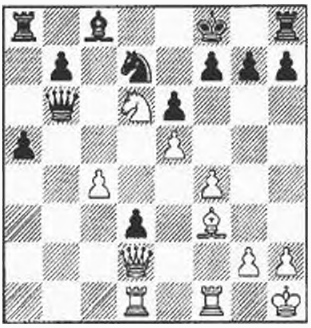
19.♗f3

Preparing to castle. 19.0–0?? d3+.

19...a5

After 19...♔e7 20.0–0 d3+ 21.♔h1 ♘c5 22.♖b1 (or 22.♕e3) 22...♕c7 23.♕b4 White maintains the pressure.

20.0–0 d3+ 21.♔h1



21...♕d4?!

Hoping that the queen and the d3-pawn would contain White's pieces. But Shirov's reply shows it's all in vain. Black's only chance was 21...♘c5. After 22.♕e3 he should play 22...♘a4. 22...♕c7 leaves White a strong initiative in the ending e.g. 23.♕xb6 (23.♕xd3 ♘b2 24.♕b1 a4 25.c5 ♕b3 is not that clear) 23...♘xb6 24.♖xd3 ♔e7 25.♖b1 ♘d7 26.♘xb7 and if 26...a4 (26...♗xb7 27.♖xb7 ♖hd8 28.♗c6) then 27.♘d8! winning the exchange since the attempt to save it leads to an even worse result – 27...♖a6 28.♘c6+ ♔e8 29.♖b8! ♘xb8 30.♖d8#.

22.♘b5! ♕c5

The capture 22...♕xc4 would have opened the c-file for the white rook(s) 23.♘d6 ♕d4 (23...♕c2 24.♕e3 and ♖xd3) 24.♖c1 ♘b6 25.♖c3.

23.♕xd3

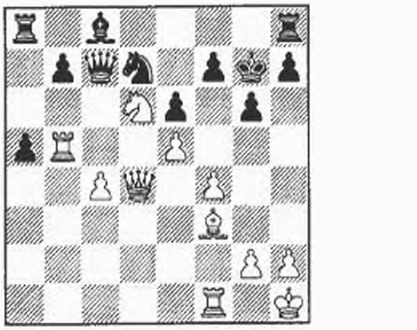
Now White has a great attacking position for only one pawn.

23...g6 24.♘d6 ♘b6

24...♔g7 loses material after 25.♗xb7 ♗xb7 26.♘xb7.

25.♖b1 ♔g7 26.♖b5 ♕c7 27.♕d4 ♘d7

(diagram)



28.f5!?

Shirov is true to himself. There were many ways to win (for example 28.♗xb7 ♗xb7 29.♖xb7 ♕c5 30.♕xc5 ♘xc5 31.♖xf7+ ♔g8 32.♖c7 or 28.♖d1), but he prefers a direct attack. Less precise was 28.♘xc8 ♖axc8 29.♖xb7 ♕xc4 30.♕xc4 ♖xc4 31.♖xd7 ♖xf4.

28...gxf5 29.♘xf5+! exf5 30.e6+ ♘e5

30...♘f6 31.♖xf5 ♕e7 32.♗d5+-.

31.♖xe5 f6 32.♖xf5 ♖f8 33.♗d5

Probably after the game Alexei was slightly disappointed to discover a nice blow: 33.♗xb7! ♕xb7 34.♖g5+ ♔h8 35.♖xf6 ♕b1+ 36.♖f1+ mating. This line was more in keeping with his style.

33...♕e7 34.♖h5 ♔h8

34...♗xe6 35.♕e4+- or 35.♖e1 ♖a6 36.♗xe6 ♖xe6 37.♕g4+-

35.♗e4 ♗xe6 36.♖xh7+ ♕xh7 37.♗xh7 ♔xh7 38.♕e4+ 1–0

48 E20

Topalov – Karpov

Round 7 19.01

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.♘f3 c5 5.g3

This variation was very fashionable during the 80ies of the last century mostly because it was played by Kasparov in his World-championship match against Karpov in 1985. White allows Black to organize an effective counterplay against the knight on c3 with ♘e4 and ♕a5 with the hope to exploit later, after the opening of files on the queenside, the power of the fianchettoed bishop on g2. Presently that line is definitely out of fashion, but it is still played from time to time on top-level by players like Kasparov, Bacrot, Topalov and Piket.

5...0–0

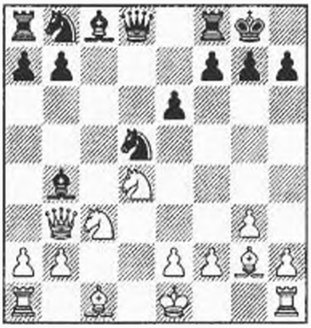
Black has here another quite reliable line – 5...♘e4 6.♕d3 ♕a5 7.♕xe4 ♗xc3+ 8.♗d2 ♗xd2+ 9.♘xd2, and after some simplifications White has only a slight advantage.

6.♗g2 cxd4 7.♘xd4 d5 8.cxd5

The moves 8.0–0 and 8.♕b3 used to be considered as main lines before.

8...♘xd5 9.♕b3

White tries often here 9.♗d2 ♗xc3 (or 9...♘xc3 10.bxc3 ♗e7) 10.bxc3 e5 11.♘b3 ♘c6 – and the powerful white bishop on g2 and the pressure along the b-file compensate the weakness of the isolated c-pawn.



9...♕b6

This move is reliable enough. Black plays here also 9...♘c6 10.♘xc6 bxc6 11.0–0 ♕a5 12.♗d2 ♗xc3 13.bxc3 ♗a6 14.♖fd1 ♕c5, followed then by the occupation of the c4-square.

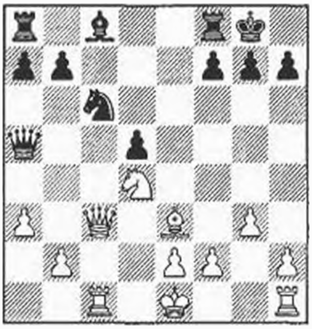
10.♗xd5

This is practically forced, otherwise White does not achieve much after 10.e3 due to 10...♘c6 11.♘xc6 bxc6 12.♗d2 ♕a6, and the move e3 turns out to be not only a loss of a tempo, but also a weakening that prevents White from castling. The game Hort – Kindermann, Dortmund 1985, continued with 13.♖d1 ♖b8 14.a3 ♗xc3 15.♕xb8 ♗b7 16.♕d6 ♗xb2 17.♗xd5 ♗xa3 18.♗b4 ♗xb4+ 19.♕xb4 cxd5 and Black had more than sufficient compensation for the exchange. Therefore White must trade his bishop on d5 in order to ensure his other bishop of a placement on the e3-square.

10...exd5 11.♗e3 ♕a5

The other line leads to a sharper play: 11...♗xc3+ 12.♕xc3 ♕g6 (this is to remind White that his light squares on the kingside are very weak too) 13.h4 (this aggressive pawn-pushing is evidently White's only chance to fight for an advantage, because after 13.0–0 ♘c6 14.♖fc1 ♗h3, White had already to think about equalizing due to the weak position of his king Kasparov – Kramnik, Moscow 1998.) 13...h5 14. g4!? (this move is trying to exploit the placement of the black queen on the kingside as well as the lead in development) 14...♗xg4 15.f3 ♗d7 16.♖g1 ♖c8 17.♕d2 ♕f6 18.♖g5 g6 19.♔f2⯹ and White had a sufficient compensation for the pawn Rogozenko – Ionescu, Bucharest 2000. After the move in the game the opposite coloured bishops do not guarantee a draw for Black indeed, but at least his drawing chances are much more real than White's winning chances.

12.♖c1 ♘c6 13.a3 ♗xc3+ 14.♕xc3



14...♕a6

This is evidently more precise than the immediate 14...♕xc3+ 15.♖xc3 ♘xd4 16.♗xd4 ♗d7 17.♔d2 (it is useless for White to play 17.♖c7, because of 17...♗c6 followed by Rac8 exchanging the rooks) 17...a6 18.♖c5 ♖fc8 19.♖hc1 ♖xc5 20.♖xc5 ♗c6±, and White's slight advantage can hardly be converted into a full point after a correct defence by Black, Nielsen – Fossan, Gausdal 1996.

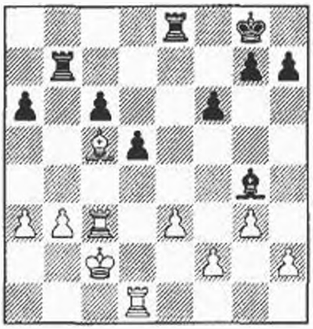
15.♘xc6 ♕xc6 16.♕xc6 bxc6 17.♔d2

But not 17.♖xc6?? d4 18.♗xd4 ♗b7, and Black wins a rook.

17...♗d7

Now, with a pawn on c6 and not on b7 Black's a-pawn is weak. On the other hand it is relatively easy for Black to defend that pawn on a6 and the c-file is now closed. White cannot achieve anything on the queenside even if he pushes his a and b-pawns. On the contrary – had the black bishop been on c6 and the black pawn on b7, White would have had then a dangerous plan with a3-a4 and b2-b4-b5.

18.♖c3 ♖fb8 19.b3 f6 20.♖d1 ♖b7 21.♔c2 a6 22.♗c5 ♖e8 23.e3 ♗g4



Black practically fixes the drawn outcome of the game with that move. White cannot push now his kingside pawns due to the weakness of the light squares and it is impossible to win the game without that. It is well known that you need to organize some play on both sides of the board in order to win an only slightly better position.

24.♖d4 ♖e4 25.♖d2 ♔f7 26.♗d4 ♖e6 27.a4 ♖b8 28.♖c5 ♔e7 29.♖a5 ♖a8 30.♔b2 ♔d7 31.♔a3 ♖ee8 32.♖c5 ♖ab8 33.♖dc2 ♖ec8 34.♖c1 h5 35.♖a5 ♖a8 36.♖c2 ♖e8 37.h4

The placement of the kingside pawns has been definitely fixed already. White is still trying to penetrate with his king on the dark squares of the queenside, but that is hardly possible with all four rooks remaining on the board, so he cannot go forward and has to come back.

37...♗f3 38.♖ac5 ♖ec8 39.♖d2 ♔d6 40.♔b4 ♖cb8+ 41.♔c3

The white king might get stuck on a5. The draw is already evident but White kept trying for 30 more moves.

41...♖c8 42.b4 ♔d7 43.♖a5 ♖e8 44.♔b2 ♔c7 45.♖c5 ♔d7 46.♗c3 ♔d6 47.♖a5 ♔c7 48.♔c1 ♖e4 49.♗d4 ♖ee8 50.

♖c5 ♔d7 51.♖dc2 ♖ec8 52.♔d2 ♖ab8 53.♗c3 ♖e8 54.♔e1 ♖a8 55.♖a5 ♔d6 56.♖d2 ♔c7 57.♖d3 ♖e4 58.♗d4 ♖ee8 59.♔d2 ♗g4 60.♖c5 ♔d7 61. ♖dc3 ♖ec8 62.♖a5 ♗f3 63.♗b6 ♖cb8 64. ♗c5 ♖e8 65.♖d3 ♔c7 66.♗d4 ♔d7 67.♗c3 ♔c7 68.♗b2 ♖e4 69.♗d4 ♖ee8 ½ – ½

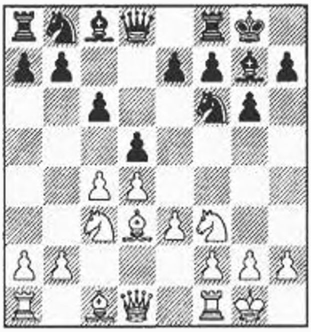
49 D11

Van Wely – Timman
Round 7 19.01
Notes by S. Shipov

This is a rather straightforward game. Black played too actively after the opening and weakened his position unnecessarily. White counterattacked and won promptly.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.e3 g6 5.♗d3 ♗g7 6.0–0 0–0 7.♘c3

The ancient Schlechter Defence is a symbiosis between the Slav and the Gruenfeld defences.



7...♗g4

Black usually exchanges his light squared bishop in order to complete his development effortlessly.

8.h3 ♗xf3 9.♕xf3

Black must play now very precisely otherwise White will open the position and materialize the potential of his bishop pair.

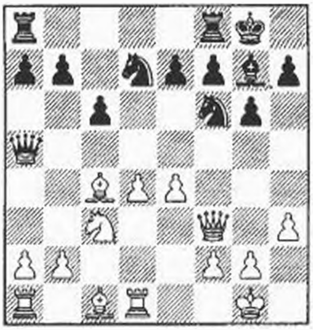
9...dxc4

The more prudent strategy – to play 9...e6 first, followed by ♘b8-d7 deserved attention too.

10.♗xc4 ♘bd7 11.♖d1 ♕a5

This is a step aside from the trodden path. The really enlightened play here: 11...e5 12.d5 e4! and Black seizes the initiative with the help of a pawn sacrifice.

12.e4!



White's other bishop becomes a powerful force as well.

12...b5

This novelty is already a step too far away from the right path. Black's best line is 12...e5!, although he cannot equalize completely after it too, for example: 13.d5 ♘b6 14.♗b3 cxd5 15.exd5 ♖fe8 16.♗g5 e4 17.♕f4 ♘bd7 18.♕d2 ♕b4 19.d6! and White has a stable advantage Franco – Illescas Cordoba, Zaragosa 1996.

13.♗b3 e5

White intended to push e4-e5 himself.

14.dxe5!

This is the concrete approach to the problems in this position! White's natural reaction 14.d5 is not so effective here. After 14...c5! Black stabilizes his space advantage on the queenside and White's bishop pair is restricted in a cage.

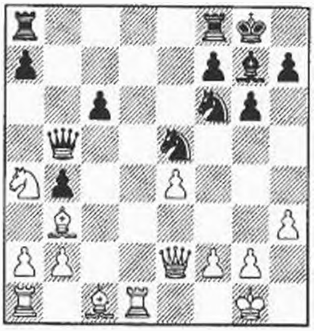
14...♘xe5 15.♕e2

White now intends to push forward the central couple of pawns f2-f4 and e4-e5. This positional threat is too hard for Black to counter...

15...b4

Black's only chance to fight effectively in this position was the pawn sacrifice: 15...♖ad8 16.f4 ♖xd1+ 17.♘xd1 (it was not so good for White to play 17.♕xd1 ♖d8 18.♕e2 ♘d3) 17...♘c4! and the arising complications were definitely double-edged.

16.♘a4 ♕b5



17.♕c2!

White needs to retain the control over the c4-square.

17...♖fd8 18.♗e3

Loek plays once again a really precise positional move delaying f2-f4 for a more opportune moment. He completes his development and fixes the weak backward c6-pawn.

18...♖d3?

This mistake leads to a swift disaster. Black's best chance to offer some stubborn resistance was the move 18...g5!?, preventing the pawn advance f2-f4 and provoking the double-edged line: 19.♗xg5?! ♘f3+! 20.gxf3 ♕xg5+ 21.♔f1 ♕h4. White should avoid that and play instead 19.♘c5 with an edge.

19.♖xd3 ♕xd3

19...♘xd3? 20.♗c4.

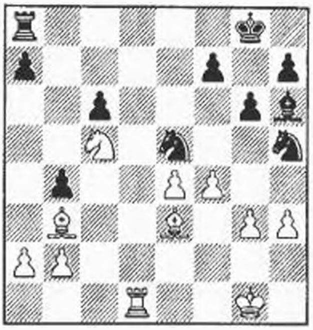
20.♕xd3 ♘xd3 21.♖d1 ♘e5 22.f4! ♗h6

Black is trying to stop the avalanche coming down from the top of the mountain! The endgame after: 22...♘ed7 23.e5 ♘d5 24.♗xd5 cxd5 25.♖xd5 is unavoidably lost for Black.

23.♘c5

The black knight is now trapped in the middle of the board. It has nowhere to retreat in case White defends his bishop on e3...

23...♘h5 24.g3! 1–0



The white king goes to f2 on the next move and Black loses a piece, so Timman resigned.

50 **E37**

Bareev – Timman

Round 8 20.01

Notes by S. Shipov

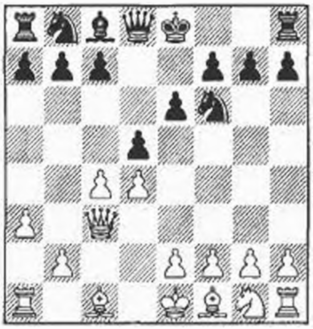
Jan Timman lost four games in a

row! It was possible that he was totally devastated psychologically after his dramatic game against Topalov.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.♕c2 d5 5.a3!

This is an amazingly clever psychological move! Evgeny chooses a line in which Black must demonstrate sharp, inventive and enterprising play in the complications. Timman was obviously not well prepared to perform.

5...♗xc3+ 6.♕xc3



Black is forced to attack now otherwise his lead in development will vanish in the haze and White's bishop pair will prevail in the end.

6...♘e4 7.♕c2 c5 8.dxc5 ♘c6 9.cxd5 exd5 10.♘f3 ♕a5+

This is a dull and boring line attempting to simplify and equalize. The main theoretical lines begin with 10...0–0 11.b4 ♗f5, or 10...♗f5 immediately.

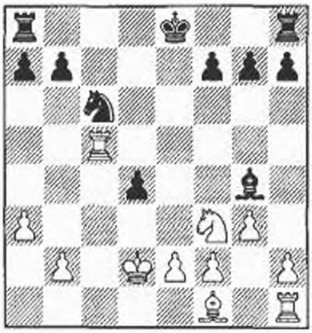
11.♗d2 ♕xc5 12.♕xc5 ♘xc5

White now has a stable positional edge. Black's isolated pawn in the centre is a real weakness without queens and not an asset.

13.♖c1

This is a novelty. Kasparov played against Georgiev in Thessaloniki in 1988, differently: 13.♗e3 ♘e4 14.♘d4 – he preserved his bishop and controlled the d4-square and after – 14...0–0 15.♖d1 ♗e6 16.f3 ♘d6 17.♘xe6 fxe6 18.♗c5 ♖ad8 19.e4 won the game as well.

13...♘b3 14.♖c3 ♘xd2 15.♔xd2 ♗g4 16.g3 d4 17.♖c5



17...d3?

This pawn sacrifice is not correct. Black's position was worse indeed, but he did not need to put all his eggs in one basket. The veteran was evidently reluctant to defend patiently an inferior position. He decided to go for broke with the idea to either confuse his opponent or terminate his agony sooner rather than later.

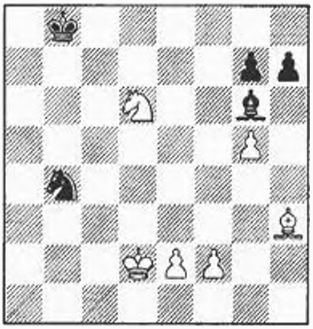
18.♔xd3 0–0–0+ 19.♔c3 ♖he8 20.h3 ♗e6

After the moves 20...♗xf3 21.exf3 ♖e1? Black would have to meet with a nasty surprise: 22.♖xc6+! bxc6 23.♗a6+.

21.♗g2 ♗d5 22.♖d1 ♗e4 23.♖d2 ♔b8 24.b4 b6 25.♖c4 f5

White has a solid extra pawn. Evgeny pressed his advantage home quite confidently and Black had no real counter-chances. To make a long story short – there is nothing to comment on anymore...

26.g4! ♖xd2 27.♔xd2 fxg4 28.hxg4 ♗d5 29.♖f4 ♖d8 30.♔c3 ♖c8 31.♔b2 ♖d8 32.g5 b5 33.♔c3 ♖c8 34.♗h3 ♖c7 35.♔d2 a5 36.♘d4! axb4 37.♘xb5 ♖f7 38.♖xf7 ♗xf7 39.axb4 ♘xb4 40.♘d6 ♗g6



41.♘f5! ♗xf5 42.♗xf5 g6 43.♗e6

Black is incapable now to defend his kingside pawns.

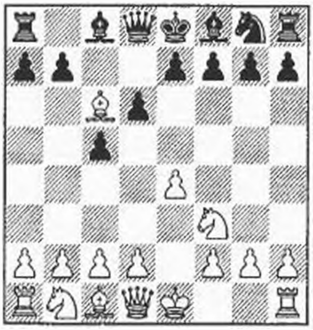
43...♘c6 44.♗g8 ♔c7 45.♗xh7 ♘e7 46.f4 ♔d7 47.e4 ♔e8 48.f5 1–0

51 **B51**

Ivanchuk – Topalov

Round 8 20.01

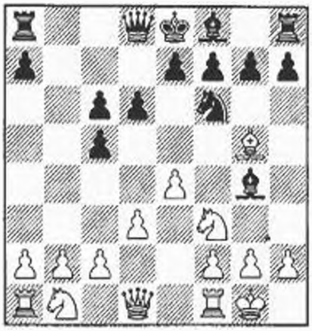
1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 d6 4.♗xc6+



This move has some advantages and some drawbacks too. White doubles Black's pawns, but on the other hand he plays once again with an already developed piece and exchanges a bishop for a knight unnecessarily, fortifying Black's pawn centre in the process.

4...bxc6 5.0–0 ♗g4 6.d3 ♘f6 7.♗g5

I think that rare move should be just forgotten after this game. It is obviously too early to develop that bishop. White has some other acceptable moves: 7.c3 e6 8.♗g5 ♗e7 9.♘bd2 0–0 10.♕a4 ♗xf3 11.♘xf3 ♕c7 12.♖fe1± Rublevsky – Tiviakov, Russia 1996, or 7.♘bd2 ♘d7 8.h3 ♗h5 9.c3 e6 10.♕a4 ♕c7 11.♖e1 ♗e7 12.d4 0–0, Skripchenko – Babula, Valle d'Aosta 2002. Objectively White has hardly anything more than a symbolic advantage in both cases.



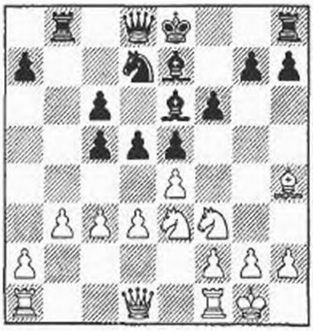
7...♘d7

This is an interesting idea. Black wants to build a powerful pawn centre with f6 and e5 in order to exploit his pawn majority in the centre.

8.♘bd2 f6 9.♗h4

It was evidently better for White to retreat 9.♗e3 – the bishop on h4 remained out of play for a long time while it would have supported the pawn break c3 and d3-d4 in the centre. White remained quite passive in the centre in this game and lost his opening advantage as a result.

9...e5 10.♘c4 ♗e7 11.♘e3 ♗e6 12.c3 ♖b8 13.b3 d5



Black managed to prevent White's counterplay with c3 and d4 and occupied the centre with his pawns. He also has a bishop pair and besides the bishop on h4 is rather misplaced and White has no clear cut plan of actions. Black has an obvious positional advantage.

14.♘d2

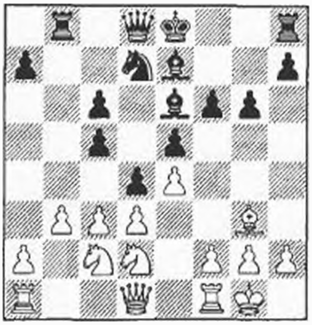
It was interesting to try the recommendation of Psakhis 14.♘f5!?. After 14...♗xf5 15.exf5 (with the idea to follow with ♘d2 and f4) 15...g5 16.♗g3 h5 17.h4 g4 18.♘d2, White has stopped Black's kingside offensive and can play f2-f3 at some opportune moment.

14...g6

Black plans active operations on the kingside quite openly, therefore it is useless for him to castle there. He did not wish to push g7-g5 with a white knight placed on e3, so he played a useful waiting move covering the f5-square and preparing d5-d4. The immediate 14...d4 was not so good because of 15.♘f5.

15.♗g3 d4 16.♘c2

This is a very strange move. If White (as you can guess from his subsequent actions) really wanted to place his knight on c4, he had better do that immediately with – 16.♘ec4. Moreover the manoeuvre with one of the knights to c4 and with the other one to a4 would have required several tempi less. White was maybe afraid of the line 16...dxc3 17.♘b1 ♗xc4 18.dxc4 ♘f8, and the black knight would have gone to d4, but that would have been hardly worse for White than what happened in the game.



16...g5

This is absolutely correct, since Black should start active operations on the side with a solidly blocked centre. Besides it was essential to prevent the move f2-f4.

17.f3 ♘f8

This knight is completely idle on d7 and it is going to participate in a kingside attack on g6.

18.♗e1

This bishop circumvented the board and came back inside White's camp having wasted three tempi along the road...

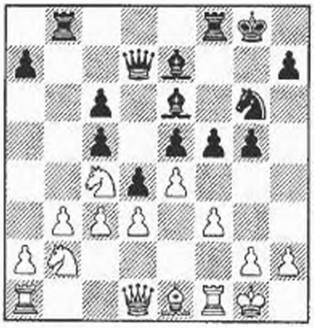
18...♘g6 19.♘c4 ♕d7 20.♘b2

White deploys his knight to a4 in order to attack the c5-pawn, but this is too slow and not effective at all, since White's other pieces are incapable of supporting it.

20...0–0 21.♘a3

The other move 21.♘a4 would not change much – after 21...f5 White's attempt to undermine Black's centre with 22.b4 does not work due to 22...fxe4 23.dxe4 (the line 23.fxe4 ♖xf1+ 24.♔xf1 ♗g4 25.♕c1 ♘f4−+ is a disaster for White since he loses material) 23...d3 and Black remains with a pawn up.

21...f5 22.♘ac4



22...g4

It was worth considering for Black to continue the attack with 22...f4!? followed by g5-g4. Naturally Black wishes to open the game in order to put his bishop pair to a good use.

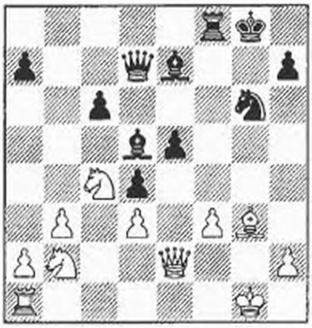
23.cxd4 cxd4 24.exf5 ♖xf5 25.♗g3

White's position is also very difficult after 25.fxg4 ♖xf1+ 26.♔xf1 ♗xg4 27.♕c2 ♕f5+ 28.♗f2 ♘f4 and Black is attacking.

25...♖bf8 26.♕e2 gxf3 27.♖xf3

It is wise to trade a couple of rooks in order to facilitate the defence of the king.

27...♖xf3 28.gxf3 ♗d5



29.♘d2

The result of White's knight maneuvers is quite indicative – he has to go back one more time on the road to the good e4-square. In case of 29.♘xe5 ♘xe5 30.♗xe5 ♗xf3 31.♕f2 ♖f5 32.♘c4 c5 the light squares around the white king are too vulnerable.

29...♕f5 30.♘bc4 ♗b4

This move defends indirectly the e5-pawn, since White loses his knight on d2 if he captures it. Black did not want to go into an endgame quite understandably: 30...♗xf3 31.♘xf3 ♕xf3 32.♕xf3 ♖xf3, and his extra e5-pawn is very weak and his bishop is also nothing to brag about.

31.♖f1 h5 32.h4 ♔h7

After 32...♘f4 33.♗xf4 ♕xf4 34.♘e4 ♗e7 Black can win the h4 pawn, but after 35.♕h2, he has to exchange on c4 in order not to lose his own e5-pawn and so he will remain with a bad bishop in the endgame.

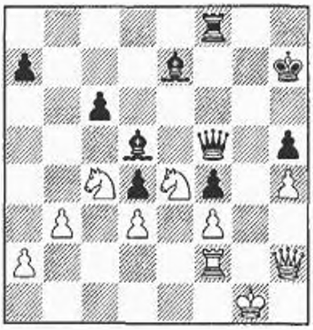
33.♘e4 ♗e7 34.♕h2 ♘f4

The move 34...♖g8 after 35.♔h1 ♘f4 36.♗xf4 exf4 37.♖g1 was leading to a position similar to that in the game after 37.♖g2 (instead of 37.♔f1).

35.♗xf4 exf4

This is better than 35...♕xf4 36.♕xf4 exf4 – because the white king is more exposed than its counterpart and therefore Black must preserve queens and also the chance to organize an attack.

36.♖f2



36...a5!

This is a standard resource – White has defended everything presently (he will simply interpose with the rook after a check along the g-file), so Black is trying to find new ways for penetration and looks for possibilities on the other side of the board.

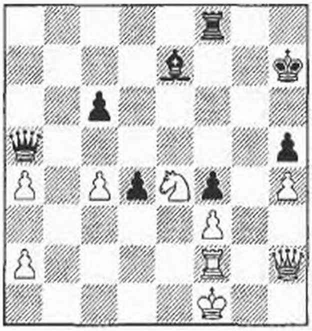
37.♔f1?!

This is a provocative move. White places his king in a precarious position, since there are still too many pieces left on the board and Black can organize a strong attack. It seemed more natural to play 37.♖g2!?.

37...a4 38.bxa4 ♗xc4?

It looks like Black overlooked his excellent winning chances here. He had to capture the other knight – 38...♗xe4! (this is a recommendation of GM Psakhis) 39.dxe4 (or 39.fxe4 ♕g4 – and White's position is absolutely critical, since Black is threatening simultaneously to check on d1, to push the f-pawn and to take simply on h4.) 39...♕e6–+ – and Black manages to oust the white knight away from c4 with a decisive advantage. For example it is bad for White to play 40.♖c2 d3 41.♖c1 ♖g8 and Black is threatening ♖g3 with an unavoidable penetration. Now White's knight on e4 is protecting him from an immediate disaster.

39.dxc4 ♕a5



40.♖b2!

Now White's rook becomes suddenly active and Black must realize that his own king is not immune at all...

40...♕xa4 41.♕e2 ♕a3 42.♖b7
½ – ½

The opponents agreed to a draw because of the variation: 42...♔h6! (the other moves simply lose) 43.♘g5 ♗xg5 44.hxg5+ ♔xg5 45.♕e5+ ♖f5 (or 45...♔h4 46.♕e1+ ♔g5 also with a draw) 46.♖g7+ ♔h6 47.♖h7+!=, and White has a perpetual.

52 **D73**

Karpov – Van Wely
Round 8 20.01
Notes by S. Shipov

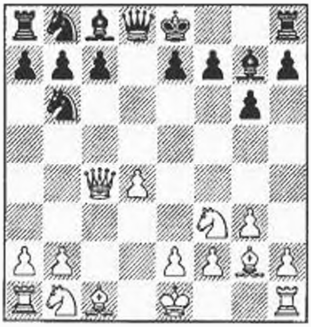
The Dutch fairy tale finally ended!

The surprising leader Loek Van Wely succumbed to the pressure of the unfading veteran. Moreover he began that game with a great advantage right after the opening...

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘f3 ♗g7 4.g3 d5 5.♗g2 dxc4 6.♕a4+

This rare variation is almost a blank spot in the theory of the Gruenfeld Defence. White's main line – 6.♘a3 has been tested numerous times in practice by the ex-world champion.

6...♘fd7 7.♕xc4 ♘b6



8.♕c3?!

This is something new – the white queen opposes Black's dark squared bishop! Karpov chose the retreat with the queen that never came to the mind of the people playing with White in that position. I believe he was improvising over the board! Yes, but a very unsatisfactory improvisation at that... White has tried in practice also 8.♕b5+, 8.♕d3 as well as 8.♕c2, and the last move seems the most logical to me – White sacrifices the d4-pawn for initiative.

8...♘a6

This looks logical – Black is preparing to undermine White's centre.

9.0–0 c5! 10.e3

The amusing trick for White 10.♗h6 ♗xh6 11.dxc5 would enable him to release the tension in the centre, but White would not have equalized with it since his dark squared bishop would be badly missed later! 10.♗e3 was not good either after 10...♘d5!.

10...0–0 11.♘a3

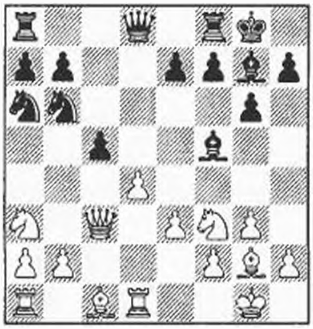
The white queen occupied the natural square of the knight so it had to be developed on the side!

11...♗f5

It seems to me that 11...♗e6! is a little better.

12.♖d1

White had to consider sacrificing that pawn with 12.♘h4!? cxd4 13.exd4 ♗xd4 14.♕f3 and he would have some counterplay.



12...cxd4

Black forced the appearance of an isolated pawn with that move, but he paid a price for that! White's bishop on c1 is joining the action now and White manages to complete his development successfully. I believe that Anatoly Evgenievich became much more confident in that moment. Black had a slight but stable advantage after 12...♗e4!.

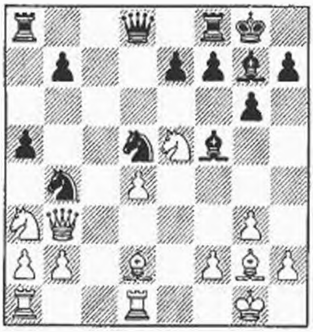
13.exd4 ♘d5?!

This is another minute imprecision! Loek enables White to place his queen favourably. It was much better to play 13...♖c8 and 14.♕b3 could be met with 14...♗e6, so White had to retreat to e1 with the queen.

14.♕b3!

White's strongest piece used to be a fugitive and it turned into a powerful force overnight. It is exerting pressure now on b7 as well as d5.

14...♘ab4 15.♗d2 a5 16.♘e5



White's pieces are very energetic now and the central area is getting hot.

16...♗e6 17.♕a4

White had better continue with the central strategy – 17.♕f3!

17...♗xe5?!

This was a strange decision by the leader of the tournament. Perhaps he overestimated his position. It was probably right for him to exchange queens. I can understand however why he did not do that. We say in Russia that the cornered beast should be captured and shot and not exchanged. I see no reason that the Dutch should think otherwise... Black's simplest solution was 17...♕e8!? The other way to trade queens was 17...♕b6 18.♘ac4 (18.♖ac1 ♕xd4!) 18...♕a6 and that could be the beginning of interesting complications – 19.a3 (19.♘xa5 ♕xa5 20.♕xa5 ♖xa5 21.a3 ♖fa8!) 19...b5 (the simple retreat to c6 deserves attention too) 20.♕xa5 ♘c2 21.♕xa6 ♖xa6 and the game is rather unclear.

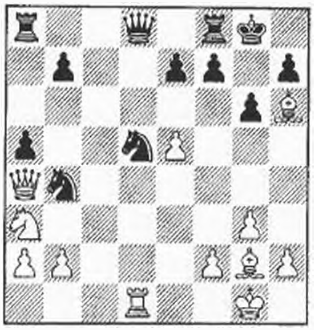
18.dxe5 ♗g4

Loek obviously relied on the retreat of White's rook and then he could follow with ♘b6 with tempo and ♕xd2. Anatoly Evgenievich calculated another possibility...

19.♗h6!

Natural and strong!

19...♗xd1 20.♖xd1



20...♖e8

Black had problems after the immediate return of the exchange with 20...e6 21.♗xf8 ♕xf8 22.♕b5. Meanwhile White has some other interesting possibilities in which he does not even regain his sacrificed material...

21.♘b5

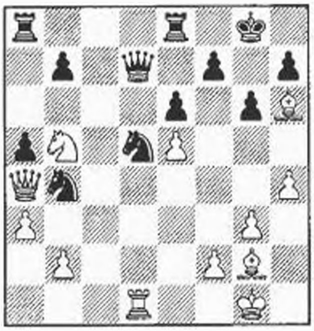
Black's couple of knights is hanging in the air dangerously because of the threat a2-a3.

21...♕d7

White's initiative is very powerful after 21...♘b6 22.♕b3! ♕c8 23.♖c1 ♘c6 24.♕e3 ♕d8 25.e6!.

22.a3 e6 23.h4!

But not immediately 23.axb4? axb4 and the tactical strike 24.♕xb4 is refuted by the beautiful tactical counterstrike 24...♖a1!.



23...♕c6?

"This is in fact the decisive mistake. After 23...♘c6! 24.♘d6 ♘xe5? 25.♕xd7 ♘xd7 26.♘xe8 ♖xe8 27.♗xd5 exd5 28.♖xd5 the endgame is absolutely hopeless for Black, while in case of 24...♖ed8, White has at least 25.♕e4 and his attack on the dark squares is overwhelming. Nevertheless Black possessed the good reply 23...♘c6! 24.♘d6 ♖e7! and the e5-pawn is difficult to defend. For instance, 25.♘e4 (25.♕e4 ♘xe5!∓) ♕c7! (25...♘xe5 26.♘f6! is unclear) 26.♖xd5! (26.♗g5 ♕xe5!∓) 26...exd5 27.♘f6+ ♔h8 28.♘xd5 ♕xe5 29.♗d2 ♔g8 30.♗c3 ♕d6 31.♘xe7 ♕xe7 32.♗xc6 bxc6 33.♕d4 f6 34.♕c4+ ♔g7 35.♕xc6 ♖a7!= (S. Semkov)".

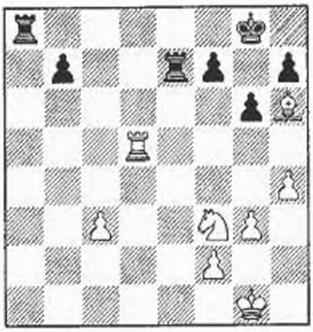
24.axb4 axb4 25.♗xd5!

This strong intermediate move settles the issue outright.

25...exd5 26.♕xb4

Two pieces are much stronger than a rook in this position mostly because the black king is so very weak...

26...♖xe5 27.♘d4 ♕a6 28.♕c3 ♕c4 29.♘f3 ♕xc3 30.bxc3 ♖e7 31.♖xd5



The rest is a matter of technique and Karpov's is always impeccable.

31...♖c7 32.♗d2 h5 33.♘d4 ♖a2 34.♖d8+ ♔g7 35.♗f4 ♖e7 36.♘f3 f6 37.♗d6 ♖f7 38.♘d4 ♖a6 39.♔g2 g5 40.♔f3 ♔g6 41.♔e3 ♖a1 42.♘f3 1–0

Black will have to weaken his kingside even more. Van Wely obviously understood that his further presence at that particular chess board would be totally in vain and so he resigned!

53 **C42**

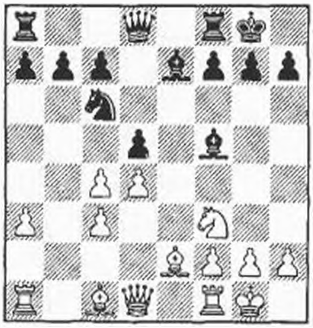
Kramnik – Anand

Round 8 20.01

Notes by S. Shipov

The game between the main tournament favourites was eagerly anticipated by everybody. Vladimir and Vishi have been great rivals for the chess Olymp for more than 7-8 years and they usually occupy the second and third place in the world ranking. Sometimes one of them goes forward, sometimes the other one does the same according to rating and tournament performance, but the follower always *catches up! Anand was the official FIDE world-champion for a while, now Kramnik is the world-champion in classical chess, but basically their strength has always been perfectly comparable...*

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘f6 3.♘xe5 d6 4.♘f3 ♘xe4 5.d4 d5 6.♗d3 ♘c6 7.0–0 ♗e7 8.c4 ♘b4 9.♗e2 0–0 10.♘c3 ♗f5 11.a3 ♘xc3 12.bxc3 ♘c6



This is one of the tabias of the Petroff Defence. White's presence in the centre is more impressive, but Black has neither weaknesses, nor problems with his development. The evaluation of the position is between = and +/=.

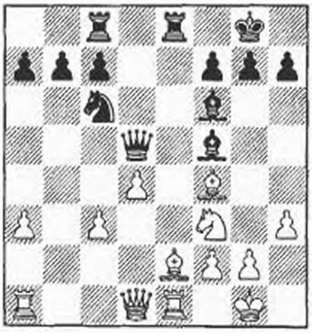
13.♖e1 ♖e8 14.cxd5 ♕xd5 15.♗f4 ♖ac8

Black often plays here 15...♗d6, but after White's best 16.c4 ♕e4 17.♗e3! Black may have problems with the safety of his queen.

16.h3!?

This delicate and polite novelty suits Kramnik's style. White delays the active operations for the future. The leeway for the king will be helpful anyway. White used to play here before 16.c4 ♕e4 17.♗e3 ♗f6, and then he had the choice between 18.♖a2 and 18.♖c1. Black is a bit worse according to the games that have been played in that position, but it can still be considered as defensible.

16...♗f6



17.♘h2!

This is a wonderful manoeuvre! Now White does not need to play c3-c4 with a black bishop on f6 and leaves it to attack the solidly fortified d4-pawn. He wants to put his knight on g4 and the bishop on f3 instead.

17...♕a5

17...♗e4 will be countered with 18.♗g4 ♖a8 19.♘f1! and Black's threat against the g2-pawn turns out to be illusory.

18.♗d2 ♖cd8

Black could have started preparing some counterplay in the centre immediately with 18...♘e7!? with c7-c5 to follow.

19.♗f3

This here is a really powerful piece! The black knight on c6 and the b7-pawn will obviously feel uncomfortable.

19...h6 20.♘g4 ♗xg4

It was not so clear where that knight was intending to go next – maybe to d5 or c4, via e3? Therefore Vishi decided to exchange it just in case.

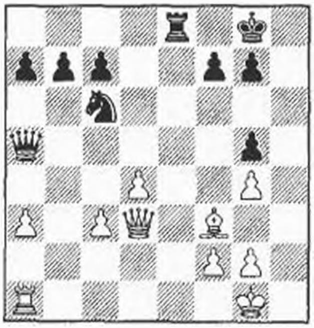
21.hxg4 ♗g5

This is quite reasonable. The bishop pair advantage is a powerful weapon in the hands of a real master. Anand thought that it would be easier to defend that position with an inferior knight against a strong bishop...

22.♗xg5 hxg5

22...♕xg5 could be countered by White with 23.♖b1!.

23.♖xe8+ ♖xe8 24.♕d3



24...♘d8

This is the only way for Black to fight against the light squared positional pressing without losing material.

25.g3!

White takes the f4-square under control and brings his king to safety.

25...c6 26.♔g2!

The white rook now has some additional prospects too.

26...♘e6 27.♖b1 ♖e7 28.c4

White is playing very well after the opening and enjoys a considerable edge now.

28...♕c7 29.♖h1! ♘f8

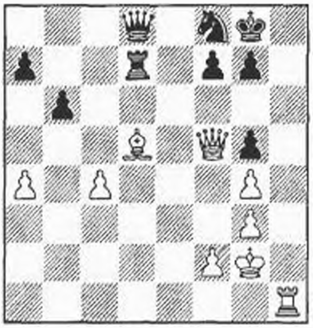
After 29...g6?! 30.d5! the black king is in a real trouble. The white queen may go to h8 via d4.

30.♕f5 ♖d7 31.d5! cxd5 32.♗xd5

The bishop is very powerful on d5! Black's position is getting worse with every move. He did not make any apparent mistakes, though...

32...♕d8 33.a4 b6

It is high time that Kramnik did something active. He outplayed his opponent positionally and he had to make a choice...



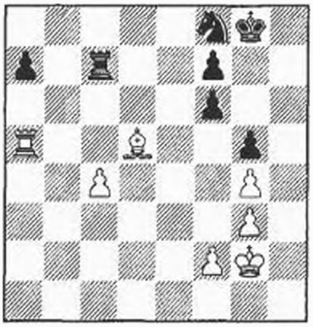
34.a5

This was a purposeful enterprising move but it posed no real problems for Black. White could have won a pawn with 34.♖h5, and Black's best probably was 34...g6 35.♕xg5 ♕xg5 36.♖xg5 ♖e7 and it would become clear that the white rook was not so easily brought back into action. After 37.♗f3 Black has 37...♖c7!, and his knight can quickly be redeployed to c5 attacking the weak a4-pawn. The move ♖h1–h5 had been in fact stronger on the previous move! The last moves of the opponents were a3-a4 and b7-b6. Black could not attack the pawn on a3 at all. So, with a pawn on a4 White had better play 37.c5!? bxc5 38.♗c4 ♖c7 and then his rook could have entered the action easily. The point is whether White's advantage would have been sufficient to win the game? It is not an easy question to answer because one should not underestimate Black's passed pawn. For example after 39.♖e5 Black has 39...♘e6! and it is too dangerous for White to capture on e6 twice. The black knight will keep trying to dislodge the white bishop from the excellent blocking c4-square via a route like f8-e6-d4-c2-a3. On the other hand White can centralize his king and push forward his kingside pawns. I think White's winning chances and Black's drawing chances are approximately balanced. White had one more really interesting possibility – 34.f4, but it did not suit Kramnik's style at all. He probably did not even think about a move like that. Topalov or Shirov would have played that move for sure! Black cannot capture on g5 because of the manoeuvre ♕f5-h5-h8 with a checkmate! So Black must defend by forcing an irrational position like 34...♕e7 35.fxg5 ♕e2+ 36.♔h3 – and White has not only an extra pawn but a powerful pressure against f7 too. I believe that even a super-player like Anand would have hardly been able to hold that position. Note that the same idea would not work a move earlier with a white pawn on a3 and a black pawn on b7. Black can counter then 33.f4 with 33...b5! and the white bishop on d5 loses its stability.

34...bxa5 35.♖a1

White transfers the action to the other side of the board. Naturally there were some other possibilities for White here but he had to justify his pawn sacrifice on the previous move after all.

35...♕f6 36.♖xa5 ♖c7 37.♕xf6 gxf6



This endgame is of course better for White. Nevertheless even a magnificent technician like Kramnik failed to win it. Well, his opponent that day was one of best defenders in the world. Anand is patience personified and his technique is impeccable too. You cannot even count how many endgames like that Vishy has saved in his glamorous chess-career. Now, just add to that number one more...!

38.♔f3 ♘e6 39.♔e3 ♔f8 40.f4 gxf4+ 41.gxf4 ♘c5

Black organizes a reliable blockade on the c5-square.

42.♖b5

42.♔d4? ♘b3+.

42...a6 43.♖b8+ ♔e7 44.♖a8 ♔d6 45.♔f3 ♔e7 46.♔g3 ♖d7 47.♖c8 ♘d3

Black here could have still lost the game with the amusing line 47...♘e6 48.f5 ♘c7? 49.♗c6 ♖d3+ 50.♔h4 and his knight would be trapped, while 50...♔d6 would be bad after 51.♖d8+ and White would win the exchange. Vishy was not planning to commit seppuku after all...!

48.♗e4 ♘b4 49.c5

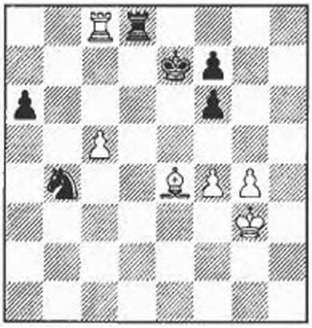
Or 49.♔f3 ♖d8 50.♖c7+ ♖d7 51.♖c5 ♖d1!=.

White managed to dislodge the blocker from the c5-square and pushed his pawn forward, but...

49...♖d8!

Black exchanges the rooks with this move and finally equalizes.

50.♖c7+ ♖d7 51.♖c8 ♖d8 ½ – ½



This draw was as dear to Anand as a win...!

54 **E12**

Krasenkow – Ju.Polgar

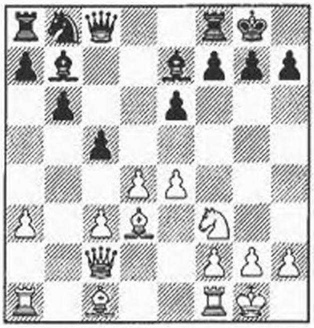
Round 8 20.01

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 e6 3.c4 b6 4.♘c3 ♗b7 5.a3 d5 6.cxd5 ♘xd5 7.♕c2 ♘xc3 8.bxc3 ♗e7 9.e4 0–0 10.♗d3 c5 11.0–0 ♕c8

Black plans to exchange queens here – 12...cxd4 13.cxd4 ♕xc2. If the white queen abandons the c-file, Black intends to trade the light-squared bishops with 12...♗a6. Black has an interesting alternative in the line 11...♕c7 and if 12.♕e2, then 12...♘d7, followed by 13...♖ac8 and 14...e5.

(diagram)

12.♕a2



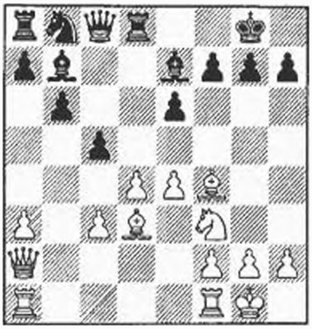
This rather original manoeuvre became popular after the games Sakaev – Shipov, St. Petersburg 1997, and Goldin – Almasi, Niksic 1997, in which Black failed to equalize after the opening. Meanwhile White plays again more often lately the traditional move 12.♕e2. This is mostly because after: 12...♗a6 13.♖d1 ♗xd3 14.♖xd3 ♘d7, there appeared the attractive novelty – 15.e5!?, with the idea not to let the black knight come to the f6-square.

12...♖d8

In case of 12...♗a6 and 13.♗xa6, Black is forced to capture with the knight – 13...♘xa6 (should Black play 13...♕xa6, he must consider the possibility 14.d5!↑ and he cannot play 14...exd5? due to 15.♕xd5+–), and this prolongs the route of the black knight to the f6-square too much. On the other hand after 14.♗f4 cxd4 15.cxd4 ♕b7 16.♕e2 ♖ac8 17.♖fd1 ♖fe8! (this is an important manoeuvre, because the juxtaposition of the black rook and the white queen along the same file makes the preparation of the pawn-break d4-d5 very difficult) 18.♖d3 ♘b8 19.♘e5 ♘d7 20.♘xd7 ♕xd7 21.♖ad1 ♗f8 22.h4 ♕b5 23.♕f3 ♖ed8 24.h5 h6= Black could have preserved the balance in the game Gelfand – Lautier, Monaco (active) 1999.

13.♗f4

White's plan connected with the development of the bishop to b2 has been tested in practice numerous times. After 13.♖d1 ♗a6 14.♗xa6 ♘xa6 (after 14...♕xa6 Black must think about 15.d5↑ just like before) 15.♕e2 ♕b7 (Black has no problems after 15...cxd4 16.cxd4 ♕b7 17.♗b2 ♗f6 18.h4 ♘c7 19.h5 h6 20.♘h2 ♘e8 21.♖d3 ♖ac8 22.♘g4 ♗g5= as in the game Lautier – Leko, Cannes 2002) 16.h4 (after 16.♗f4 cxd4 17.cxd4 ♖ac8 18.♖d3 ♘c7 19.♘e5 ♘e8!∞ as it was played in the game Gershon – M. Gurevich, Antwerp 1999, Black only needed to play 20...♘f6, in order to get an excellent game) 16...♘c7 17.h5 h6 18.♘e5 ♘e8 19.♗b2 ♘f6 20.♖e1 b5⇄ and Black had good counterplay in the game Radjabov – Leko, Linares 2003.



13...♘c6!?

Judit Polgar's excellent novelty clarifies the situation definitely. After 13...♗a6, and 14.♗xa6!? (The inert move 14.♖ad1 after 14...♗xd3 15.♖xd3 ♘d7 16.♖fd1 ♘f6 17.♗g5 h6! 18.♗h4 cxd4 19.cxd4 ♕b7= enabled Black to equalize completely in the game Kasimdzhanov – Gelfand, Wijk aan Zee 2002.) 14...♕xa6 (in case of 14...♘xa6 15.d5 exd5 16.exd5 ♕f5 17.♗e5 ♗d6 18.♖fe1 ♘c7 19.c4± White manages to create a protected passed pawn in the middle of the board) 15.d5 exd5 16.exd5 ♘d7 17.c4 b5± Whte's chances are slightly preferable according to Gelfand's analysis.

14.d5 ♘a5

The exchange of the pawns with – 14...exd5?! 15.exd5 is a mistake, because after 15...♘a5 16.c4 b5, White can play 17.♕c2! g6 18.♖ae1± and obtain a clear advantage.

15.c4 b5!

White cannot preserve his powerful pawn centre after this strong move.

16.cxb5 exd5 17.exd5 c4 18.♗e4 ♗xd5 19.♖ae1 ♗xe4 20.♖xe4 ♗f6 21.♗e5

After 21.♖fe1, Black's simplest line to equality is 21...♕c5 22.a4 a6! =.

21...♗xe5 22.♘xe5 ♕b7 23.♘c6 ♘xc6 24.bxc6 ½ – ½

55 **E97**

Ponomariov – Radjabov

Round 8 20.01

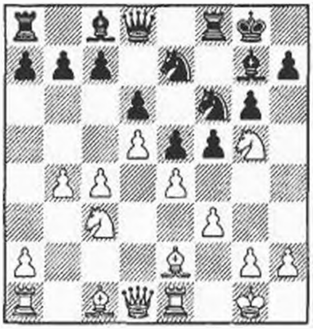
Notes by S. Shipov

The official FIDE world-champion was totally out of form. His mind was probably occupied with something other than chess. The negotiations for his match with Kasparov were rumoured to have reached a dead end...

1.♘f3 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 ♗g7 4.e4 d6 5.d4 0–0 6.♗e2 e5

Teimour ardently sticks to the King's Indian Defence despite some defeats. Most probably he did not have at that moment another well analysed opening to play for Black in answer to 1.d4. He had nowhere to run to as one might say!

7.0–0 ♘c6 8.d5 ♘e7 9.b4 ♘h5 10.♖e1 f5 11.♘g5 ♘f6 12.f3



12...♔h8

That was a wise decision. This move is always useful for Black in all lines and that can hardly be true for any other move for Black at that particular moment. Teimour played against Evgeny Bareev in the second round and he decided to head for the f4-square with his knight immediately, but he was not successful: 12...♘h5 13.c5 ♘f4 14.♗c4! – White's bishop avoided being exchanged favourably and his advantage was evident. I have already mentioned numerous times in my comments about another success of the "Moscow wolf – the killer of favourites" – 12...c6 13.♔h1 h6 14.♘e6 ♗xe6 15.dxe6 ♘e8 16.♕b3 ♘c7 17.c5! etc. Bareev – Topalov, Dortmund 2002.

13.♖b1

This novelty is imitating Bareev in a way. He played also ♖a1–b1 against Radjabov in a bit different situation and that rook proved to be very useful there indeed...

White's main line here happens to be 13.♗e3!, and it enjoys excellent statistical results. White has good chances to start active actions first. For example see what happened in the game between two players who were playing blind-chess – 13...♘e8 14.♖c1 c6?! (it is better for Black to play 14...h6) 15.c5! ♘g8 16.exf5 gxf5 17.f4 ♘e7 18.cxd6 ♘xd6 19.dxc6 ♘xc6 20.♗c5 and White had a decisive advantage, Kramnik – Ivanchuk, Monaco 1997.

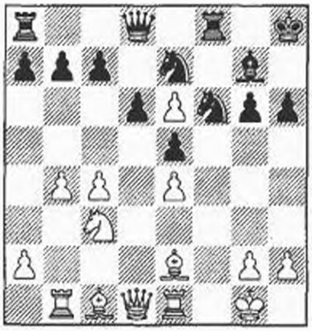
13...h6 14.♘e6 ♗xe6 15.dxe6

It is a well-known fact that in this structure the e6-pawn is both an asset and a weakness for White. It all depends on who plays better!

15...fxe4

The primitive attack against the infiltrator on e6 fails presently – 15...♕c8 16.♘d5 ♖e8 17.♗xh6!±.

16.fxe4



16...♘c6!

This formerly passive black knight is deployed to a wonderful outpost – d4.

17.♘d5

After 17.♗e3 ♘d4 18.♗xd4 exd4 19.♘d5 Black should retreat his knight to g8 with the idea to follow with c7-c6, because the immediate attack of the e6-pawns backfires – 19...♖e8 20.♘f4 g5 21.♘g6+ ♔g8 (21...♔h7 22.♗d3!) 22.c5! and the white bishop comes to c4.

17...♘g8!?

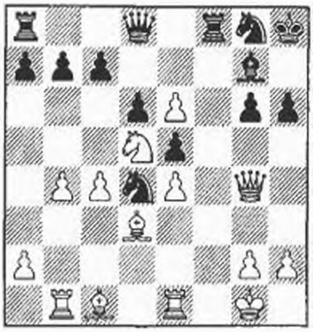
This move is with the right thematic idea. Black intends to repel the active white knight from the centre gradually without any exchanges.

18.♗d3

Black will naturally follow 18.♗e3 with 18...♘d4!. The line 18.♗g4!? ♘d4 19.b5 c6 20.♘b4 ♕e7 21.♗e3 ♖ac8 22.bxc6 bxc6 23.♗xd4 exd4 24.♕a4 was very interesting for White, because he was not only preserving his e6-pawn, but he was beginning an attack on the queenside as well.

18...♘d4 19.♕g4

White's task is clear – he wants to dominate on the light squares!



19...g5

After 19...c6 White has 20.♕xg6! and the capture on d5 loses quickly. 19...♔h7 will be countered with 20.♗e3! and after the exchange on d4 the black king will be in trouble. So White forced a weakening in Black's king-position. What now?

20.♕h3

This is too inert! White's tentative positional manoeuvres will finally lead him to a position with a pawn down and no compensation for it at all. The courageous piece sacrifice: 20.♗b2 c6 21.♗xd4 exd4 22.♖f1 cxd5 23.exd5, is a bit too enterprising! The pawn-break 20.h4! however seemed to be very appropriate and logical and Black's defensive task would have been really laborious!

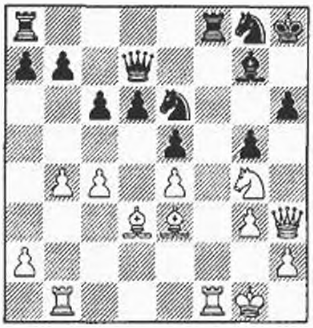
20...c6 21.♘e3 ♕f6 22.♘g4

White probably had to play 22.♘f5 ♘xe6 23.c5! – and he would have serious counter-chances. There might follow 23...d5 (23...dxc5 24.bxc5 ♘xc5 25.♗a3!) 24.♖f1 ♘f4 25.♗xf4 exf4 (25...gxf4 26.b5!) 26.exd5 cxd5 27.♔h1! etc.

22...♕e7!

Black naturally does not need to exchange the good g5-pawn for the ripe fruit on e6.

23.♗e3 ♘xe6 24.g3 ♕d7 25.♖f1



Black has an extra pawn indeed but White preserves a certain positional pressure. Teimour chooses a rather sharp method of realization of his advantage!

25...d5!?

Black's urgent task is to resurrect his napping light pieces. The white forces however will also get new dynamic possibilities. I have to share with you that commentators are often affected by the result of the game. If

Teimour had not won that game I would have had to change the evaluation of the last move into (?!)... Black could have also tried the routine dark squares play with – 25...a5 26.b5 ♘c5.

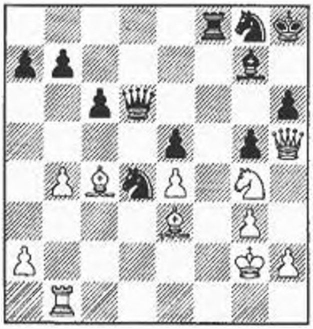
26.♖f5?

This is a wrong decision. The white rook comes here with tempo, so what? White could have tried the seemingly paradoxical line 26.exd5 cxd5 27.♘f2! and his bishop pair might become very powerful.

26...dxc4

Black had an even stronger line here – 26...♘d4 with the idea to follow with 27.♗xd4 dxe4!.

27.♗xc4 ♘d4 28.♖xf8 ♖xf8 29.♕h5 ♕d6 30.♔g2



30...b5!

Black's move in the game as well as the next one is played with the idea to repel or simply exchange White's dangerous bishops.

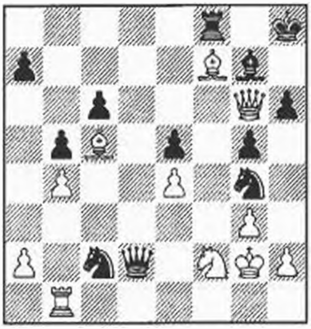
31.♗f7 ♘c2! 32.♗c5

The game is getting sharper. Both sides disregard the safety of the kings. White's initiative does not compensate the material losses in the line 32.♗xg5 ♖xf7 33.♕xf7 hxg5 34.♕h5+ ♘h6.

32...♕d2+ 33.♘f2

After 33.♔g1 ♘e1! 34.♘f2 ♘f6 35.♕g6 ♘g4! White is in big trouble.

33...♘f6 34.♕g6 ♘g4!



Black now has a powerful counterattack and White is helpless.

35.♔g1 ♘ce3!

Someone said that the bishop pair is a force to be reckoned with. What about the pair of knights?!

36.♗xe3 ♘xe3 37.h4 ♕e2! 38.♕h5 g4! 0–1

Black's queen intends to checkmate on g2 via the f3-square. Teimour played the closing stages of that game impeccably and won quite deservedly. Naturally there were plenty of complex and unclear moments in this exciting game. One thing remains to be answered, though... What the...was White's rook on b1 doing the whole game??

56 **B33**

Shirov – Grischuk

Round 8 20.01

Notes by S. Shipov

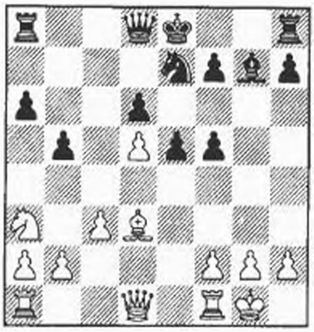
These two players are almost from different generations, but there is already a long dramatic history of clashes between the two of them. The older player won their semifinal of the

FIDE World Championship in New Delhi in the year 2000. It was time for revenge...

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6

There is not much more to say about this opening line time and again. Almost all top-players in the world started playing the Lasker–Sveshnikov variation! A matter of surviving after all...

3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 e5 6.♘db5 d6 7.♗g5 a6 8.♘a3 b5 9.♗xf6 gxf6 10.♘d5 f5 11.♗d3 ♗e6 12.0–0 ♗xd5 13.exd5 ♘e7 14.c3 ♗g7



This is one of the most popular lines and it is so well analysed that there is nothing to comment...

15.♕h5 e4 16.♗c2 ♕c8

That transposition of moves is not affecting the development of the fight. The game Shirov – Kramnik from the fifth round continued 16...0–0 17.♖ae1 ♕c8 18.♗b3 and the same position was reached like in this game...

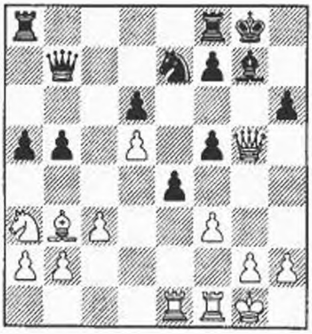
17.♖ae1 0–0

Black's pawns in the centre are rather vulnerable and if White manages to capture them the black king will be in a real trouble. White's position has its drawbacks too – that notorious knight on a3 makes us remember Dr. Tarrasch...

18.♗b3 a5 19.♕g5

After 19.♘xb5 a4 20.♗d1 ♕c5 Black recaptures his pawn and has excellent prospects.

19...♕b7 20.f3 h6



21.♕f4

This is a novelty! Shirov decides to try something new first, probably afraid of home preparation of his young but insidious opponent. He played instead 21.♕g3 against Vladimir Kramnik.

21...a4 22.♗c2 b4!

All that seems to be very logical. Black breaks White's fortifications on the queenside.

23.cxb4 ♕xb4 24.fxe4

White in his stead has a great plan in mind. He wants to attack the black king with his queen from the h7–square...

24...♘g6

It becomes clear now that the placement of the white queen enabled Black to accomplish a key regrouping of his pieces with tempo.

25.♕xf5 ♗xb2

Alexander is playing bravely and extremely aggressively! I would not be surprised at all if he had all this analysed beforehand at home... The blocking move 25...♗e5 followed by the capturing on b2 with the queen seemed to be very solid too.

26.e5!?

You should not expect anything different from a super–active player like Shirov! He is opening an important diagonal.

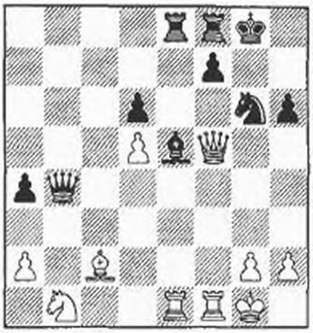
26...♗xe5

Of course not 26...♕xa3? 27.e6! and White's attack is irresistible. White has now to defend his sorry knight somehow.

27.♘b1

After 27.♕h3 Black can play the cold–blooded 27...♗c3!?, and continue to collect material. The queen will join the defence of the king later after the check from d4. In case of 27.♕d3 Black can trade queens from d4, and that is a real nuisance for the devoted attacker.

27...♖ae8



Black has completed successfully the mobilization of his forces and his position is very solid. He will not fear White's attack at all.

28.♗e4?

Alexey's ambition to win at all cost is ruining him. He had to play instead 28.♖e4 ♕c5+ 29.♔h1 ♕xc2 30.♖xe5 and make a draw in this approximately equal endgame.

28...♗f4!

This is a forced refutation of White's play. The pin along the e–file becomes a telling factor now.

29.g3

29.♖xf4? ♕xe1+.

29...♖e5! 30.♕g4 ♖xe4 31.♖xe4 ♕xe4 32.gxf4 ♖b8! 0–1

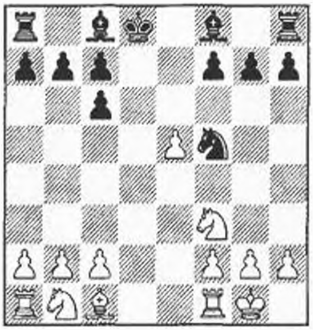
The poor knight decides the ill fate of this game at last! It cannot retreat because of the check of the black queen from e3. White resigned! After 33.♕g2 Black wins with the simple combination 33...♕xb1! 34.f5 (or 34.♖xb1 ♖xb1+ 35.♔f2 ♖b2+) 34...♖b2 35.♕g3 ♕e4 36.fxg6 ♕d4+! and White remains a couple of pawns down in a position with queens, or only a pawn down, but in a king and pawn endgame. That's a hell of a choice indeed!

57 **C67**

Anand – Krasenkow

Round 9 21.01

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 ♘f6 4. 0–0 ♘xe4 5.d4 ♘d6 6.♗xc6 dxc6 7.dxe5 ♘f5 8.♕xd8+ ♔xd8



The Berlin variation became particularly popular after the match Kramnik – Kasparov (London 2000). Black complies with the worsening of his pawn structure (White practically has an extra pawn on the kingside), his king is rather vulnerable in the centre and the rooks are disconnected too. On the other hand Black has the bishop pair and dominates on the light squares. The variation is very popular in the contemporary tournament practice, mostly because it is very suitable whenever the players for Black aim at a draw and besides White's possibilities are quite reduced.

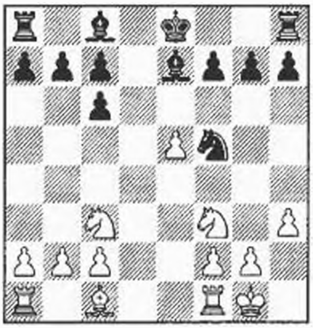
9.♘c3 ♔e8

This old move is reliable enough. In fact Black played the other possibility here 9...♗e7 much more often in the super-tournaments of the past year 2003 and Vallejo tried quite successfully 9...♘e7 against Anand in Linares 2003.

10.h3

White prepares the advance g2-g4 just in case and meanwhile the black bishop is deprived from the g4-square.

10...♗e7



11.♖d1

Topalov with White against the same opponent only two rounds later exchanged the dark-squared bishops immediately with 11.♗g5 and won the game subsequently, although it was absolutely not void of mistakes.

11...♘h4 12.♘xh4

After 12.♘d4 Black can persist with the idea to trade the knights with 12...♘f5, or play 12...♘g6 too.

12...♗xh4 13.♘e2

After 13.♗e3 ♗f5 14.♖d2 ♖d8 15.♖ad1 h5 16.f3?! ♖xd2 17.♖xd2 ♗e1 Black is definitely not worse, Lekic – Fontaine, Ikaros 2003.

13...h5

Black prevents White's eventual advances on the kingside and creates scope for action of his own rooks.

14.♗e3 ♗e7 15.♖d2 h4 16.♖ad1 ♖h5 17.f4

Svidler defended his pawn with the bishop here 17.♗f4 and after 17...♗e6 18.♘d4 ♗d5 19.b3 ♖d8 20.c4 ♗e4 21.e6! had some edge, Svidler – Van den Doel, Bled 2002. Anand most probably did not like 17.♗f4 because of 17...g5 18.♗h2 g4 19.hxg4 ♗xg4 and Black's counterplay was quite sufficient.

17...♗e6 18.♘d4 ♗c5 19.♗f2

½ – ½

After 19...♗xd4 White preserves some symbolic advantage, but it is quite dubious that he can materialize it.

58 **B12**

Grischuk – Bareev

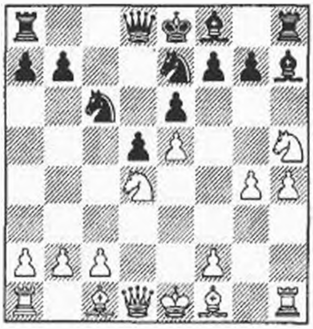
Round 9 21.01

Notes by N. Vlassov

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5

Black players seem to be better prepared for this sharp line every time it appears in the tournament practice. It becomes more and more dangerous to play it with White. Anand won with White against Karpov in this line (not because of the opening, though...), but White lost three games in the same tournament altogether!

3...♗f5 4.♘c3 e6 5.g4 ♗g6 6.♘ge2 c5 7.h4 h5 8.♘f4 ♗h7 9.♘xh5 cxd4 10.♘b5 ♘c6 11.♘xd4 ♘ge7



12.♖h3N

Grischuk beat Seirawan with 12.c3 last year. White has also tested here 12.♗b5, but after 12...a6 Black has an easy task equalizing.

12...a6

After 12...♘xe5 Black must be careful about 13.♗g5 leading to a complex game. (White does not have much after 13.♗h6 ♖g8; or 13.♗b5+ ♘d7!.)

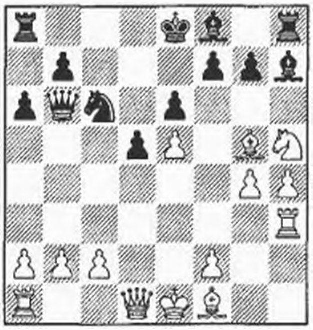
13.♗g5

In case of 13.♘xc6 ♘xc6 White has problems defending his c2, e5 and h4 pawns. For example 14.♗f4 (It is even worse for White to play 14.f4 ♘b4 15.f5 exf5∓) 14...♘b4 15.♗d3 ♗xd3 (or 15...♘xd3+ 16.cxd3 ♗g6) 16.cxd3 ♖c8 and Black's compensation for the pawn is more than sufficient.

13...♕b6!

It is not so good for Black to play 13...♘xd4 14.♕xd4 ♘c6 15.♕a4 (15.♕f4 ♕c7 16.0–0–0 ♕xe5) 15...♕b8 16.0–0–0 b5 17.♕b3± and White's lead in development might be decisive.

14.♘xc6 ♘xc6



15.♗d3?!

The attempt to exploit the power of the rook on h3 seems to be more natural: 15.♖b3 ♕c7 16.♗g2 and White's prospects are bright – his king will find a reliable shelter on f1.

Bareev's recommendation seems to be the best: 15...♕a5+ 16.c3 (After 16.♕d2 ♕xd2+ 17.♔xd2 ♘xe5 18.♖xb7 ♘xg4, White's rook on b7 looks fearsome, but it can hardly be supported by the rest of the pieces and the evaluation of the position is in favour of Black. 16.♗d2 ♕c7 17.f4 0–0–0, and even if the white king manages to run to the queenside, Black will tear White's kingside apart.) 16...♕c7 17.f4 ♗g6, and White will have to give his rook on b3 for the black knight: 18.♗d3 ♗xh5 19.gxh5 ♘a5∓. The subsequent fight will be centered on the possibility to open files for the black rooks. If Black succeeds to do that the extra exchange will tell otherwise White's bishop will be an excellent match for the black rook.

15...♗xd3

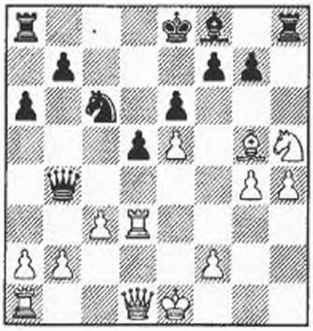
Black can also try the riskier: 15...♕xb2!? 16.♖b1 ♕xe5+ with a complex fight ahead, for example 17.♔f1 (17.♖e3 ♕h2 18.♖xb7 ♗b4+) 17...♕c7∞ 18.♗xh7 ♖xh7 19.c4 d4 20.♕c2 ♖h8 21.c5.

16.♖xd3 ♕b4+!?

After his defeat against Shirov, Evgeny is reluctant to capture on b2 again. Quite rightly so, by the way! 16...♕xb2 17.♖b1 ♕xe5+ 18.♖e3 (18.♔f1 b5 19.♖e3 ♕d6) 18...♕h2 19.♖xb7 ♕g1+ 20.♔d2 ♕xd1+ 21.♔xd1 and the endgame is very sharp with mutual chances; it is quite possible that Black's best here is 16...♘xe5!? 17.♖e3 ♘c4 18.♖b3 ♕c6∓.

17.c3

After 17.♔f1 ♘xe5 18.♖d4 ♕b5+ Black is clearly better.



17...♕e4+

17...♕xb2!? was worth trying again. Look at this elegant line shown by Bareev: 18.♖b1 ♕xa2 19.♖xb7 ♘xe5 20.♖e3 ♘c4 21.♕xd5? (21.♖e2 was the correct move.) 21...♕a1+ 22.♔e2 ♕f1+!−+ Evgeny decided to play safer during the game.

18.♖e3 ♕g2 19.♖c1!?

Grischuk is looking for a real fight! It was safer and most probably better to give back the extra pawn in order to exchange queens with: 19.♔d2 ♕xf2+ 20.♕e2 ♕xe2+ 21.♖xe2 ♖h7 22.♘f4 ♗e7 23.♗xe7 ♔xe7 24.h5±.

19...♕g1+

Black could have tried too: 19...♗c5 20.♘xg7+ ♔d7 and White's defence is difficult.

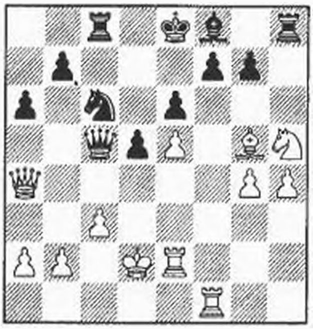
20.♔d2 ♕xf2+ 21.♖e2!?

This was also a risky decision. It was more prudent for White to go into an endgame: 21.♕e2 ♕xe2+ 22.♖xe2, but his winning chances diminished too...

21...♕c5 22.♕a4 ♖c8

Or 22...b5 23.♕f4 ♖c8 24.a3 ♖c7= with an equal position.

23.♖f1



23...♖c7!?

Black is in a fighting spirit too and avoids the approximately equal endgame after 23...d4 24.cxd4 ♕d5 25.♘f4 ♕xd4+ 26.♕xd4 ♘xd4 27.♖ef2 ♖c2+ 28.♔e3 ♖xf2 29.♖xf2 ♘c6 30.♔e4 ♗e7=

24.♔c1

It is too risky to play 24.b4!? b5! (24...♕a7!?) 25.bxc5 (25.♕b3 ♕b6) 25...bxa4 and the white pawns are a sorry sight. The white king might have been safer at its initial position after 24.♔e1, for example 24...d4 25.cxd4 ♕xd4 26.♕xd4 ♘xd4 27.♖e4=.

24...d4!

This is better than 24...b5 25.♕f4 (25.♕xa6 ♘d4 26.♖ef2 ♖a7 27.♕xa7 ♕xa7 28.♖xf7 Bareev; 28...♕xf7 29.♖xf7 ♔xf7 30.cxd4 ♗e7+) 25...d4 26.♔b1 dxc3 27.bxc3 ♕xc3 28.♖d1± (Bareev). Black has an extra pawn indeed, but White has a crushing attack as a result.

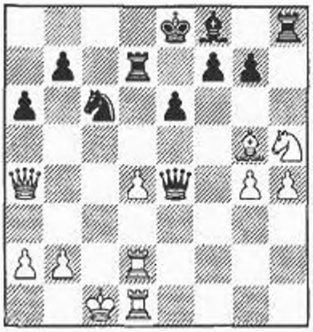
25.♖d1 ♖d7

But please not 25...dxc3?? 26.♖d8#

26.♖cd2?!

White is worse really, but he had to consider 26.♔b1 dxc3 27.♖xd7 ♔xd7 28.♖c2; or 26.♖e4 dxc3 27.♖xd7 ♔xd7 28.♗e3 cxb2+ 29.♔xb2 ♕a5∓.

26...♕xe5 27.cxd4 ♕e4



28.♖c2?

This is a mistake, but White is in trouble too after: 28.♕c2 ♕xg4! (Black can play for a win without any risk the endgame after 28...♕xc2+ 29.♔xc2 f6 30.♗e3 ♘b4+ 31.♔b1 ♘d5∓; 29.♖xc2 f6 30.♗e3 ♔f7 31.♖f2 ♗e7∓) 29.d5 ♖xd5 30.♖xd5 exd5 31.♖xd5 ♗e7! (31...f5!? is not so clear because of 32.♘g3! ♕xg3 33.♕xf5 ♕g1+ 34.♔d2! ♗b4+ 35.♔c2 ♘d4+ 36.♖xd4 ♕xd4 37.♕c8+ ♔f7 38.♕xh8∓) 32.♘xg7+ ♔f8 33.♕c3 ♗xg5+ 34.♖xg5 ♕xh4 35.♕c5+ ♘e7 36.♘h5 ♖h6!–+.

28...f6! 29.♗d2

Or 29.♗xf6 ♖xh5–+.

29...b5?!

Black was winning without too many problems after 29...♕xg4 30.♖xc6 (30.♘f4 ♖xd4 31.♕b3 ♖xf4–+) 30...bxc6 31.♘f4 ♔f7.

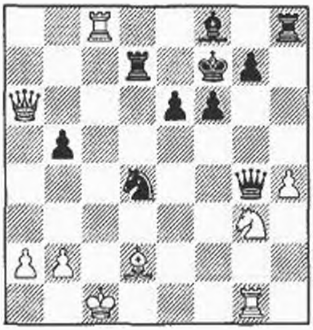
30.♕xa6

White missed here a wonderful chance to exploit Black's imprecision with the intermediate move 30.♘g3! ♕xg4 (30...bxa4 31.♘xe4 ♘xd4 32.♖c8+ ♔f7 33.♘g5+ fxg5 34.♖f1+ ♔g6 35.h5+ ♔h7 36.♖fxf8 ♖xf8 37.♖xf8=) 31.♕xa6 ♘xd4 32.♖c3 ♔f7 33.♕c8 e5∓ and Black remains with a substantial edge, but the position is very sharp.

30...♘xd4–+

It is totally hopeless for White now.

31.♖c8+ ♔f7 32.♘g3 ♕xg4 33.♖g1



33...♘e2+

Black was winning immediately with the beautiful 33...♗d6!! 34.♖xh8 ♖c7+ 35.♔b1 ♕g6+ and he checkmates spectacularly.

34.♘xe2 ♕xe2 35.♖d1?

This was White's last mistake in a quite difficult position, though. The move 35.♖c2 was the most stubborn but Black should win without too much of an effort after 35...♕d3 36.♖e1 ♕d5.

35...♗b4!–+ 36.♕c6 ♗xd2+ 37.♔c2 ♗a5+

37...♕d3#

38.♔b3 ♕xd1+ 0–1

59 B33

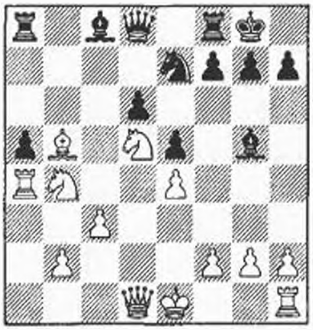
Ju.Polgar – Shirov

Round 9 21.01

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 e5 6.♘db5 d6 7.♗g5 a6 8.♘a3 b5 9.♘d5 ♗e7 10.♗xf6 ♗xf6 11.c3 ♗g5 12.♘c2 0–0 13.a4 bxa4 14.♖xa4 a5 15.♗b5

J.Polgar played 15.♗c4 in her game against Topalov in the first round of the same tournament.

15...♘e7 16.♘cb4



16...♗d7

Black used to play here before 16...♘xd5, but lately his results in this line became disastrous.

17.♘xe7+ ♗xe7

But not 17...♕xe7? because of 18.♘d5 ♕d8 19.♗xd7 ♕xd7 20.♘b6.

18.♘c6

After 18.♗xd7 Black equalizes easily with: 18...axb4 19.♗c6 ♖xa4 20.♕xa4 bxc3 21.bxc3 ♕b8 22.0–0 ♗d8= Svidler – Ivanchuk, Polanica Zdroj 2000.

18...♕e8!

It is worse for Black to play 18...♗xc6?! 19.♗xc6 ♖b8 20.♖a2 ♕b6 21.♗d5± Motylev – Agamaliev, Bydgoszcz 1999. Black's position is clearly inferior due to the weakness of the f7-square.

19.♕d5

In case of 19.♘xe7+ ♕xe7 20.♗xd7 ♕xd7= Tiviakov – Cifuentes Parada, Hoogeveen 2000, the weaknesses on a5 and b2 balance each other.

19...♗e6

Black's attempt to exploit the pin fails after: 19...♗f6?! 20.♕xd6 ♖c8 and now White can choose between 21.♖c4 and 21.♘e7+ ♗xe7 22.♕xd7 ♕xd7 23.♗xd7.

20.♕d3 ♗d7 21.♕d5

21.♘xe7+ ♕xe7=.

21...♗e6 22.♕d3 ♗d7 ½ – ½

60 E15

Radjabov – Kramnik

Round 9 21.01

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 b6 4.g3 ♗a6 5.♘bd2 d5

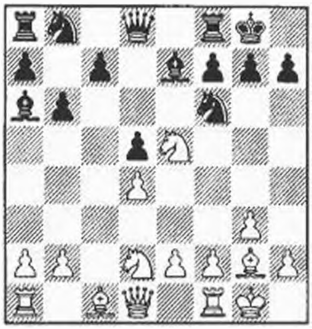
The line with the development of the white knight on d2 used to be considered as harmless for Black for a long time. The reason is that it is not easy for White to organize an effective piece pressure against the black hanging pawns c5+d5 in the centre. The absence of the white knight on c3 becomes a telling factor, since it attacks the d5-

pawn and restricts the mobility of the black pieces in similar pawn structures, because they must defend the vulnerable d5-pawn. Kramnik clarifies the pawn structure in the centre immediately with his last move. Black usually preferred before 5...♗b7 6.♗g2 ♗e7, but here he should be well prepared for the sharp lines after 7.e4!? (if White wastes additional time for the preparation of the move e2-e4 with 7. 0–0 0–0 8.♕c2, then Black has even more reasons to go into a position with hanging pawns after – 8...d5 9.cxd5 exd5 10.♘e5 c5 11.dxc5 bxc5∞, moreover that the tactical complications after 12.♘dc4?! ♕c7 13.♗f4 g5! 14. ♗xg5 dxc4 15.♕f5 ♘e8! 16.♗xb7 ♕xb7+ were clearly in favour of Black as the game Gupta – Joecks, Bad Orb 1989, showed conclusively) 7...♘xe4 8. ♘e5 ♗b4 (after 8...d5 9.cxd5 exd5 10. ♕a4+ ♔f8 11.0–0 f6 12.♘d3=∞ Black lost his right to castle in the game Atalik – M. Roeder, Groningen 1997) 9.♕g4 0–0 10.♗xe4 f5 11.♗xb7 fxg4 12.♗xa8 c6 13.0–0 ♕c7 14.♘e4 ♘a6 (Black can also play here 14...♗e7, and White usually follows that with 15.♗f4∞, or 15.♖d1∞) 15.♗xc6 dxc6 16.♗f4 ♗d6 17.♘xd6 ♕xd6∞ as for example in the game Piket – Ivanchuk, Roquebrune 1992.

6.♗g2 ♗e7 7.cxd5

White practically gives up the fight for an opening advantage if he refrains from capturing on d5. After 7.0–0 0–0 8.b3 c5 9.dxc5 (in case of 9.♗b2 ♘bd7 10.♘e5 ♖c8 11.cxd5 ♘xd5 12.♘xd7 ♕xd7 13.dxc5 ♖fd8 14.♘c4 ♗xc5= Black had a good position in the game Rodriguez Vargas – Ribli, Surakarta 1982) 9...♗xc5 10.♗b2 ♘c6 (it was also possible for Black to play 10...♘bd7 11.♖c1 ♗b7 12.♘d4 ♖c8 13.♘b5 ♕e7 14.cxd5 ♘xd5 15.♘e4 ♖fd8 16.♘xc5 ♘xc5 17.♕d4 ♘f6= and the opponents agreed to a draw in the game Piket – Karpov, Wijk aan Zee 1998) 11.♖c1 (after 11.a3 ♗e7 12.♖c1 ♖c8 13.b4 dxc4 14.♕a4 ♘b8 15.b5 ♕d7 16.♘d4 ♖c5 17.♘xc4 e5∞ the complications were definitely in favour of Black in the game Piket – Kramnik, Monaco 2002) 11...dxc4 12.♘xc4 ♖c8 13.a3 ♕xd1 14.♖fxd1 ♗xc4 15.♖xc4 ♘a5 16.♖a4 ♘xb3 17.♖xa7 ♖fd8 18.♖xd8+ ♖xd8= and White's bishop pair advantage did not matter much, because of the considerable activity of the black pieces in the game Tregubov – Motylev, Bastia 2003.

7...exd5 8.♘e5 0–0 9.0–0



9...♗b7

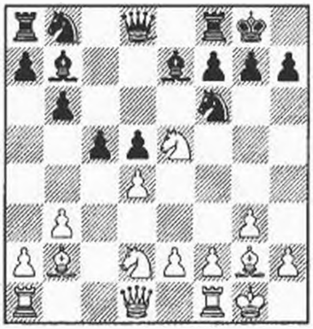
The move 9...c5 is a bit premature here, because after 10.dxc5 Black must comply with the formation of an isolated pawn 9...♗xc5 (Black's attempt to have hanging pawns with 10...bxc5?! after 11.♘dc4! ♗b7 12.♕b3 ♗c6 13. ♘e3± turned out to be very bad for him as the game Prakash – Kunte, Mumbai 2003, showed). Meanwhile after 11.♘b3 ♖e8 12.♘d3 ♘bd7 13.♗g5 h6 14.♗xf6 ♘xf6 15.♖c1 ♖c8 16.♖e1 ♕d6 17.e3 ♖ed8∞ White failed to prove that Black's d5-pawn was weak in the game Sosonko – Browne, London 1980.

10.b3 c5

Black's alternative here is the move 10...a5!? in order to organize some queenside counterplay as quickly as possible. The absence of the White knight on c3 is felt once again, since Black has excellent counterchances with a5-a4. For example after 11.♕c2 (in case of 11.a3 ♘a6 12.♗b2 c5 13.♖c1 ♖e8⇄ Black had a good counterplay in the game Nisipeanu – Batard, Trignac 2002, but possibly it was better for White to play 11.♗b2, which after 11...♘a6 12.♖c1 c5 13.♘d3 ♖e8 14.♘f4∞ led to a complicated position with mutual chances in the game Khalifman – Leko, New Delhi (m/1) 2000) 11...♘a6 12.♗b2 c5 13.dxc5 bxc5 14.♖ad1 with the help of 14...a4! 15.bxa4 ♘b4 16.♕b1 ♕c7⇄ Lautier – Karpov, Monte Carlo (active) 2000, Black has an excellent position.

11.♗b2

Black does not mind the formation of hanging pawns in his camp at all. After 11.dxc5 bxc5 12.♗b2 ♘bd7 (Black must complete his development first, since after 12...a5 White has 13.e4! d4 14.♘ec4 ♘fd7 15.♖e1⩲ and he was better in the game Romanishin – Psakhis, Moscow 1983) 13.♘dc4 ♖b8 14.♘xd7 ♕xd7 15.♘e5 ♕e6 16.♖c1 d4 17.♗xb7 ♖xb7 18.♘d3 ♖c8 19.♖e1 ♘g4∞ and Black's position was satisfactory in the game Tregubov – Gelfand, Rethymnon 2003.



11...♖e8

This is a fighting move. Black could have simplified the position a bit with 11...♘bd7. After 12.♘xd7 ♕xd7 13.dxc5 bxc5 14.e4 (in case of 14.♖c1 d4 15.♗xb7 ♕xb7 16.♘c4 ♘e4⇄ as it was played in the game Gomez Jurado – Campos Moreno, Barcelona 1992, Black's chances were at least equal) 14...d4 (after 14...dxe4 15.♗xf6 ♗xf6 16.♘xe4 ♕xd1 17.♘xf6+ gxf6 18.♖fxd1 ♗xg2 19.♔xg2± Black must defend a really difficult endgame, meanwhile after 14...♖fd8 15.exd5 ♗xd5 16.♘c4 ♗xg2 17.♔xg2 ♕b7+ 18.♕f3 ♕xf3+ 19.♔xf3 ♘d5 20.♖fd1⩲ Topalov – Gelfand, Monaco 1999, or 14...♖ad8 15.exd5 ♗xd5 16.♘c4 ♗xg2 17.♔xg2 ♘d5 18.♕f3± Kramnik – Anand, Frankfurt 1999, his defence is far from easy too) 15.♖e1 a5 16.a4 ♕e6 17.♖c1 ♘g4 18.♗a3 ♘e5 19.♗f1 ♖fc8 20.f4 ♘d7 21.♘c4 ♖cb8 22.♗g2∞ and the opponents agreed to a draw in the game Khalifman – Ju.Polgar, Hoogeveen 2002.

12.♖c1 ♘a6 13.dxc5

White can still delay for a while the transfer to a pawn structure with hanging pawns, and the game Prakash – I. Ibragimov, Guntur 2000, continued with: 13.e3 ♗d6 14.♖e1 ♕e7 15.♘d3

♖ac8 16.dxc5 bxc5∞ and proved that White cannot rely on any advantage after that too.

13...bxc5 14.e3

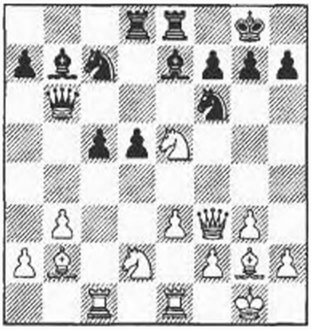
It is weaker for White to play 14.♕c2, because after 14...♗d6! 15.♘df3 ♕e7 16.e3 ♖ac8 17.♕b1 ♘e4∓ as in the game Lautier – Gelfand, Las Vegas (active, m/3) 1999, Black regrouped his forces quite comfortably, because of the vulnerability of the white pawn on e2.

14...♕b6

Here already in case of 14...♗d6 White can counter with 15.♘d3. Black had tested before 14...♖c8 15.♘df3 ♗d6 16.♘d3 ♘e4∞, Gausel – Petursson, Reykjavik 1988, with a complicated position.

15.♖e1 ♖ad8 16.♕f3 ♘c7

The black knight is headed for the e6-square.



17.g4!?

Teimour Radjabov understands that if he continues to play passively Black will gradually seize the initiative and tries to sharpen the game.

17...♘e6 18.h4 h6 19.♕g3∞ ½ – ½

The adversaries agreed to a draw in a position that was so interesting and full of life...

61 C42

Timman – Karpov

Round 9 21.01

Timman and Karpov repeated 24 moves of the game Kramnik – Anand that was played on the previous day and then agreed to a draw. Nothing new under the sun...

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘f6 3.♘xe5 d6 4.♘f3 ♘xe4 5.d4 d5 6.♗d3 ♗e7 7.0–0 ♘c6 8.c4 ♘b4 9.♗e2 0–0 10.♘c3 ♗f5 11.a3 ♘xc3 12.bxc3 ♘c6 13.♖e1 ♖e8 14.cxd5 ♕xd5 15.♗f4 ♖ac8 16.h3

Shirov played against Karpov at the end of the last year and obtained some advantage after: 16.c4 ♕e4 17.♗e3 ♗f6 18.♖c1 h6 19.d5 ♘e5 20.♗xa7 ♘d3 21.♗xd3 ♕xd3 22.♖xe8+ ♖xe8 23.♗d4 ♕xa3 24.♗xf6 gxf6 25.♕d2 ♔g7, but then he suddenly blundered with 26.h3? ♗xh3 and the game ended in a draw outright after: 27.♖c3 ♕a1+ 28.♖c1 ♕a3 29.♖c3 ♕a1+ Shirov – Karpov, Cap d'Agde 2003.

16...♗f6 17.♘h2 ♕a5 18.♗d2 ♖cd8 19.♗f3 h6 20.♘g4 ♗xg4 21.hxg4 ♗g5 22.♗xg5 hxg5 23.♖xe8+ ♖xe8 24.♕d3 ♘d8 ½ – ½

62 C67

Topalov – Ponomariov

Round 9 21.01

Notes by N. Vlassov

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 ♘f6 4.0–0 ♘xe4 5.d4 ♘d6 6.♗xc6 dxc6 7.dxe5 ♘f5 8.♕xd8+ ♔xd8

“The Berlin Wall” – variation used to be considered as bad for Black. Vladimir Kramnik resurrected it and it was reborn. He became world champion mostly because of this line, though…

9.♘c3 ♗e7 10.♖d1+ ♔e8 11.g3

A. Khalifman suggested in "Opening for White according to Anand", (volume 1, Sofia 2003, page 185) that White should strive for advantage with 11.♗g5 ♗xg5 12.♘xg5 ♔e7 13.♖d3 h6 14.♘f3! – Sergei Soloviov.

11...h6?!

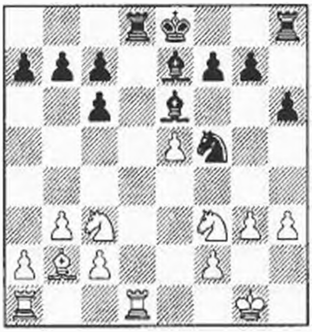
Ponomariov considers this move to be bad and suggests instead 11...♗e6, giving the following lines: 12.♗g5 (12.b3 ♖d8 13.♗b2 a6!⇄ with the idea to play c5) 12...♗b4 (12...f6 13.exf6 gxf6 14.♗f4 ♗d6 15.♘d4 ♘xd4 16.♖xd4 ♖d8 17.♘e4±; 12...♖d8 13.g4; 12...h5!? 13.♗xe7 ♔xe7 14.♖d2 ♖hd8 15.♖ad1 ♖xd2 16.♖xd2 ♖d8 17.♖xd8 ♔xd8 18.♔f1 ♗d5=) 13.♘e2 ♗c5 (13...♗d5 14.♘fd4 ♘xd4 15.♘xd4 h6 16.♗e3 ♖d8 17.a3 ♗f8 18.♖d2±) 14.♘f4 h6 15.♘xe6 fxe6 16.♗d2 ♖f8 17.♔g2 g5 18.h3 ♖d8∞.

12.b3 ♗e6 13.♗b2 ♖d8

Ponomariov thinks that it was worth playing 13...a5!? for Black.

14.h3

Topalov's pawn-play is really impressive!



14...g5?!

Black had better play 14...a6 15.g4 ♘h4 16.♘xh4 ♗xh4 17.f4 g6 18.♘e4 ♗e7 19.♔g2 h5 20.♔g3 hxg4 21.hxg4 ♖xd1 22.♖xd1 ♖h4 23.♘f2 ♖h7∞ with a good position, or 14...h5 (Ponomariov).

15.g4!

In case of 15.♘e4 ♖xd1+ 16.♖xd1 ♗d5 17.♖e1 ♗xe4 18.♖xe4 ♖g8 Black is still holding firmly, although White is of course better.

15...♘g7 16.♘e4!

White has nothing much after 16.♘d4 h5 17.f3 hxg4 18.hxg4 ♗d5∞ ∆19.♘xd5 cxd5 20.♘f5 ♘e6 (Ponomariov).

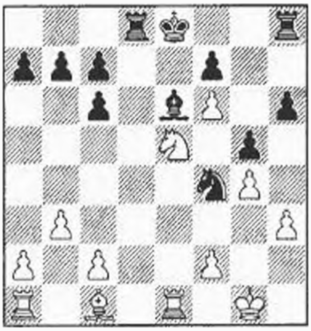
16...♗d5 17.♘f6+!

It is not so good for White to play 17.♘fd2 c5 18.c4 ♗c6 (Ponomariov) and Black is OK.

17...♗xf6

Black is even worse off after 17...♔f8 18.♘d2 c5 (18...♘e6? 19.c4+–) 19.♘xd5 ♖xd5 20.♘c4 (Ponomariov).

18.exf6 ♘e6 19.♘e5 ♘f4 20.♖e1 ♗e6 21.♗c1!



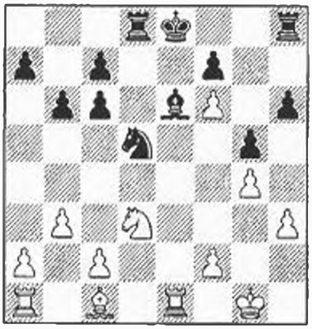
21...♘d5

This was a serious mistake. Ruslan was unnecessarily afraid to play 21...♘xh3+! 22.♔g2 (22.♔h2 ♘xf2 23.♔g3 ♘d1 24.c4 h5! 25.♗xg5 ♘b2!

26.♖e2 ♖g8 Ponomariov, and Black was seizing the initiative.) 22...♘f4+ 23.♗xf4 gxf4 24.♔f3 (24.♖ad1 ♖xd1 25.♖xd1 h5) 24...♖d2 25.♘d3! (It is worse for White to play 25.c4 h5! 26.g5 ♖g8 27.♔xf4 ♖xf2+ 28.♘f3 ♖xf3+ 29.♔xf3 ♖xg5∞ Ponomariov) 25...h5 26.g5 ♖g8 27.♖ac1! ♖xg5 28.♔xf4, White will trap the black rook on d2, but Black will have good chances for a draw even an exchange down.

22.♘d3! b6

Black was lost after 22...♘xf6 23.♘c5 b6 24.♘xe6 fxe6 25.♖xe6+ ♔f7 26.♖xc6 ♖d1+ 27.♔g2+− (Ponomariov).



The results of the opening are clearly in favour of White. There follow some amusing developments:

23.c4! ♘xf6 24.♘b4!

Black cannot defend simultaneously his queenside pawns against White's knight as well as his f6–knight against ♗b2.

24...c5

Or 24...♖d6 25.♗b2 ♔e7 26.♗e5± (Ponomariov).

25.♗b2

Black's position is very bad after 25.♘c6 ♖d6 26.♘xa7 ♖g8 (26...♔e7 27.f4 c6 28.fxg5 ♘h7 29.g6 ♘g5 30.g7+−) 27.♗b2 ♖g6 (27...♘d7 28.♘b5 ♖d2 29.♘xc7+ ♔d8 30.♘xe6+ fxe6 31.♗c3 ♖d3 32.♖e3 ♖xe3 33.fxe3±) 28.♗e5 ♖d7 29.♖ad1 h5 30.f3± (Ponomariov).

25...cxb4 26.♗xf6 ♖f8 27.♗xd8 ♔xd8±

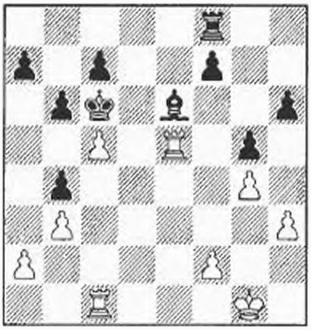
Ponomariov showed later his renowned stubbornness in defence and managed to save half a point mostly because of the help of his coach.

28.c5?!

It was clearly better for White to play 28.♖ad1+ ♔c8 29.♔g2±, or 28.♖e4!? with the idea f4.

28...♔d7 29.♖ac1 ♔c6 30.♖e5?

White had here the much stronger 30.cxb6+ ♔xb6 31.♖e5 ♖d8 32.♖ec5 ♖d7 33.♖c6+ ♔b7 34.♔h2+−



30...b5!

White does not have any immediate breakthrough now and Black already has some real counterplay.

31.♖d1 a5 32.♖d4 ♖a8 33.f4 gxf4 34.♖xf4 a4 35.♖xb4 axb3 36.axb3 ♖a3 37.h4?

White dissipates his advantage like that. After 37.♔f2 ♗xb3 38.♖d4 ♗c4 39.♖h5± he still had substantial winning chances.

37...♗xb3 38.h5 ♗c4 39.♔f2

Black can counter 39.g5 with 39...f6! (but not 39...hxg5? 40.♖xg5 ♖a1+

41.♔h2 ♗d5 42.♖d4 ♖h1+ 43.♔g3+–) 40.gxf6 ♖f3 41.♖b2 ♖xf6= (Ponomariov).

39...♖a1 40.♖b2 f6 41.♖e7 f5! 42.♖h7

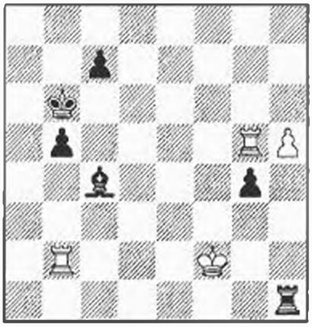
White has advantage neither after 42.gxf5 ♖f1+ 43.♔g3 ♖xf5 44.♔g4 ♖g5+ 45.♔h4 ♖g1, nor after 42.g5 hxg5 43.h6 ♖h1 44.h7 f4=.

42...fxg4 43.♖xh6+ ♔xc5 44.♖g6 ♖h1 45.♖g5+

In case of 45.h6 Black makes a draw with the help of 45...♗d3!, while 45...♖h2+? loses after: 46.♔g3 ♖xb2 47.h7 ♖b3+ 48.♔xg4 ♗e2+ 49.♔h4 ♗f1 50.♖h6+– (Ponomariov).

45...♔b6?

This retreat was not the best. Black had to play 45...♔d4 46.♔g2 ♖h4 47.♔g3 ♖h3+ 48.♔xg4 ♖h1, or 45...♗d5!? (Ponomariov).



46.♔g3?!

Vesselin misses his chance again! 46.♔g2! ♖h4 (46...♖h3?? 47.♖xg4 ♖xh5 48.♖xc4+– Ponomariov) 47.♔g3 ♖h3+ 48.♔xg4 ♗e6+ 49.♔f4 c6 50.♖e5 ♗f7 51.♔g4 ♖h1 52.♖f2 ♖g1+ 53.♔h3! and White must win, for example: (53.♔f4 ♖h1= Ponomariov) 53...♗g8 54.h6 b4 55.♔h2 ♖g4 56.♖h5 ♗h7 57.♖f7 b3 58.♖xh7 b2 59.♖h8 ♔c7 60.♖b8! ♔xb8 61.h7 b1♕ 62.h8♕+ ♔c7 63.♖h7+ ♔d6 64.♕f8+–.

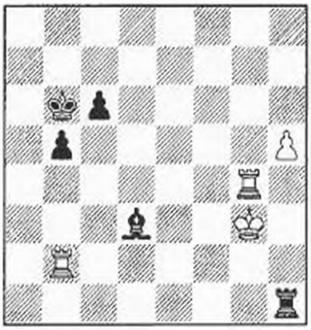
46...c6!

Black does not need to enter the complications after 46...c5!? 47.♖c2!.

47.♖xg4

After 47.♔xg4 the simplest way for Black to make a draw is to trade the rooks: 47...♖g1+ 48.♔f4 ♖xg5 49.♔xg5 ♗d3 (Ponomariov).

47...♗d3



The draw outcome becomes evident now. White cannot push his passed pawn forward unless he exchanges a pair of rooks. Following that Black will give his bishop for White's passed pawn and the couple of connected passed pawns will provide him with an easy draw against the rook.

48.♖h2 ♖xh2 49.♔xh2 c5 50.♖g6+ ♔a5 51.♖c6 c4 52.h6 ♔b4 53.♔g3 ♔c3 54.♔f4 b4 55.♖c7 b3 56.h7 ♗xh7 57.♖xh7 ♔c2 58.♔e3 ½ – ½

63 D94

Van Wely – Ivanchuk

Round 9 21.01

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.e3 g6

Ivanchuk avoids the theoretical dispute over the fashionable line 4...♗f5 5.♘c3 e6 6.♘h4 and enters the Schlechter variation.

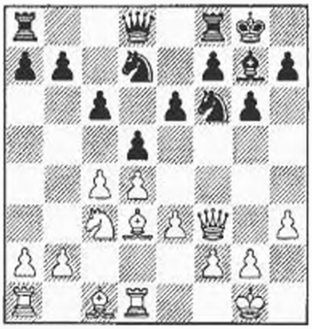
5.♘c3 ♗g7 6.♗d3

6.♗e2 is more popular.

6...0–0 7.0–0 ♗g4 8.h3 ♗xf3 9.♕xf3 e6

Nobody has managed to prove yet that after 9...dxc4 10.♗xc4 ♘bd7 11.♖d1 e5 12.d5 e4 13.♘xe4 ♘e5 14.♘xf6+ ♗xf6 15.♕e2 ♘xc4 16.♕xc4 cxd5 17.♖xd5 ♕b6 18.♖b5± Black's compensation for the pawn is sufficient.

10.♖d1 ♘bd7



11.b3

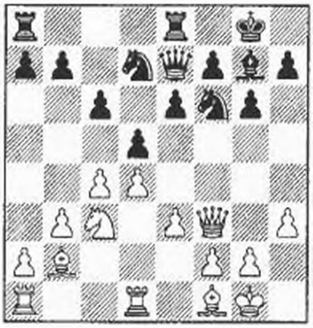
The line chosen by the grandmaster from Ukraine is not sharp nevertheless it is abundant with fine positional nuances. White has a bishop pair indeed, but he cannot open the position in the centre so easily in a favourable situation for him. For example after 11.e4 Black can play 11...e5!? 12.exd5 exd4 13.dxc6 ♘e5 14.♕e2 ♘xd3 15.♖xd3 bxc6 16.♗g5 ♕a5 17.♗xf6 ♗xf6 18.♘e4 ♗g7 19.♕f3 ♖ab8 20.b3 ♖fe8= and Black had a good position in the game Polugaevsky – Smyslov, Moscow 1960. After 11.♕e2 ♘b6 12.b3 ♖e8 13.♗b2 ♘c8, in the game Agdestein – Karpov, Wijk aan Zee 1988, White opened the centre with 14.e4 and following 14...dxe4 15.♘xe4 ♘xe4 16.♗xe4 ♘d6 17.♗c2 ♕a5 18.a3 ♖ad8 19.♕f3 ♖d7 20.♗c3 ♕g5 21.♖d2 ♖ed8 22.♖ad1 h5⇄ had to think about the defence of his d4-pawn. White's immediate actions on the queenside with 11.b4 and then 11...dxc4 12.♗xc4 after 12...♘b6 13.♗b3 ♘bd5= enabled Black to solve his opening problems completely in the game Korchnoi – Smyslov, Leningrad 1967.

11...♖e8 12.♗b2

White provokes Black sometimes into immediate actions in the centre with the move 12.♗f1. Then after 12...e5 (the passive move 12...a6, after 13.♗b2 ♕e7 14.♖ac1 ♖ad8 15.♕e2 h5 16.♕c2 ♘b6 17.♗d3 ♘c8 18.♘b1! ♘h7 19.♗a3 ♕c7 20.♘d2 ♘b6 21.♘f3 ♘d7 22.♗b4 ♘hf6 23.♗c3± as in the game Korchnoi – Petrosian, Velden (m/1) 1980, enabled White to regroup his forces in a wonderful fashion, as a result of which Black's pawn-break e6-e5 was maximally impeded, while White's pawn offensive on the queenside was imminent) 13.cxd5 e4 14.♕e2 ♘xd5 15.♘xd5 cxd5 16.♕b5 ♘b6 17.♗a3 (17.a4!? a6 18.♕e2 ♗f8 19.♗d2 h5 20.♗e1± Avrukh – Hess, Biel 2000) 17...a6 18.♕a5 ♘c8 after 18...♖c8 19.♖ac1 ♕f6 20.♖c5 ♗f8 21.♖xc8 ♖xc8 22.♗c5± Black had some problems to defend his d5-pawn in the game Ribli – Smyslov, London (m/6) 1983) 19.♕xd8 ♖xd8 20.♖ac1 ♗f8 21.♗xf8 ♔xf8 22.♖c7 ♘d6 23.♖c5 ♘f5 24.♖dc1 ♔e7 25.♗e2 ♔d6± and White preserved a slight advantage in the endgame in: Christiansen – Rohde, San Francisco

1987.

12...♕e7 13.♗f1



13...♖ad8

The pawn-break 13...e5, after 14.cxd5 e4 15.♕g3 ♘xd5 16.♘xd5 cxd5 17.♖dc1 ♖ac8 18.♖c7 ♖xc7 19.♕xc7 ♘c5 (19...♘b8?! 20.♕a5± Vera – Castillo, Dubai 1986) 20.♕a5!? (in case of 20.♕xe7 ♖xe7 21.♗a3 ♖c7 22.♖c1 ♘e6± White fails to take any advantage out of the pin and the unavoidable exchanges at the end are only in favour of Black) 20...b6 21.♕b5⩲ does not yield complete equality to Black.

Black can organize the pawn-break in the centre in another fashion: 13...dxc4 14.bxc4 e5, and after 15.♖ab1 (15.d5 e4 16.♕e2 ♘c5 17.♕c2 ♘fd7∞ Hartung Nielsen – Olsen, Copenhagen 1997) 15...♖ad8 (in case of 15...e4 16.♕e2 c5 as it was played in the game Wintzer – B. Schmidt, Germany 1989, White can continue with the traditional move 17.a4!?⩲) 16.♗a1 ♘b6 17.a4⩲ and White was slightly better in the game Hjartarson – Petursson, Akureyri 1988.

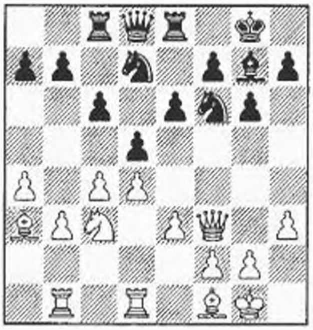
14.a4

White is preparing 15.♗a3, but the move with the a-pawn enables Black to create some counterplay later on the queenside. The straightforward pawn offensive on the queenside with 14.♖ab1 a6 15.c5 as in the game Mchedlishvili – Kuporosov, Moscow 1999, was countered with 15...e5! 16.b4 exd4 17.exd4 ♘e4 18.a4 ♗h6⇄. White can try instead a regrouping of forces with 14.♖ac1 ♘b6 15.♕e2 ♘c8, and here in the game Lelchuk – Kuporosov, Berlin 1995, White had the move 16.♕c2!? with the idea to continue playing in the similar fashion as in the game Korchnoi – Petrosian, Velden (m/1) 1980, which we have already mentioned before.

14...♖c8

Black vacates the d8-square for the queen in case White follows with 15.♗a3.

15.♗a3 ♕d8 16.♖ab1



16...a5!

The consequences of the move a2-a4 are evident now. Black has a useful outpost on the b4-square as a result.

17.♕e2 ♗f8 18.♕b2 ♖a8=

White loses now his bishop pair advantage and that signifies the end of the opening argument in this game.

19.♗xf8 ♖xf8 20.b4 ½ – ½

64 **E32**

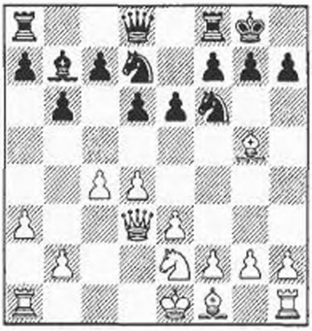
Bareev – Karpov
Round 10 23.01
Notes by S. Ivanov

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.♕c2 0–0 5.a3 ♗xc3+ 6.♕xc3 b6 7.♗g5 ♗b7 8.e3 d6 9.♘e2!?

Evgeny Bareev is looking for new ways to play in the opening just like in the Challengers tournament in Dortmund – 2002. It is really quite amazing to see what new can be invented in one of the most popular lines of the classical system of the Nimzo-Indian Defence. The idea of the move 9.♘e2 is to bring the knight to c3 where it is going to be perfectly placed in order to put pressure on the centre. White usually played here 9.f3 followed by a scheme of development including ♗d3+♘e2 or ♘h3+♗e2.

9...♘bd7 10.♕d3

The other placement of the queen seemed to be more natural here – 10.♕c2, for example: 10...c5 11.♘c3 cxd4 12.exd4 ♕c7 13.♗d3 ♖ac8 14.0–0 ♗a6∞ Ivanchuk – Topalov, Linares 1999. The idea behind 10.♕d3 is, in case Black plays what can be expected i.e. c7-c5 and c5xd4, to capture on d4 with the queen.



10...h6

This line is gradually becoming quite popular and Garry Kasparov started playing it, for both sides at that! There was a theoretical discussion about the move 10...♗a6 11.b4!? (or 11.♘c3 d5 12.♕c2 ♗xc4 13.♗xc4 dxc4 14.♕a4 h6 15.♗h4 c5 16.♕xc4 cxd4 17.♕xd4 ♘c5 18.♗xf6 ♕xf6 19.♕xf6 gxf6 20.0–0–0 ♖fc8 21.♔b1 f5= with an equal position, Ivanchuk – Kasparov, Rethymnon 2003) 11...c5 12.b5 ♗b7 13.♘c3 a6 (13...h6 14.♗h4 ♖c8 15.d5 ♘e5 16.♕d1 exd5 17.cxd5 c4 18.♕d4± Ionov – Feoktistov, St. Petersburg 2003) 14.f3 h6 15.♗h4 ♕e7 (15...axb5 16.♘xb5 d5 17.cxd5 exd5 18.♗e2±) 16.♗e2 cxd4 (16...d5!? 17.0–0 ♖fc8) 17.♕xd4 e5 18.♕d1! g5 19.♗g3 axb5 20.♘xb5 d5 21.0–0 Kasparov – Grischuk, Rethymnon 2003, and White had an advantage because of his bishop pair in this rather open position.

11.♗h4 ♕e7 12.♘c3 c5 13.♖d1

Karpov probably expected all this, because the two players had already played that same position before in the active chess tournament in Cap d'Adge – 2002. Bareev played there 13.♗e2, and after 13...cxd4 14.♕xd4 e5 15.♕d1 ♗xg2 16.♖g1 ♗c6 17.♗g4 g5 18.♗f5 ♖fd8 19.♕e2 ♔f8 20.♗g3 ♘c5 his compensation for the sacrificed pawn was insufficient. He is playing much more precisely now.

13...♖fd8 14.♗e2

It was worth considering for White here 14.d5!?, preserving the tension in the centre. After 14...♘e5 15.♕c2 ♘g6 16.♗g3 White keeps a slight edge, for example: 16...♘h5 (16...exd5 17.cxd5 ♘h5 18.♗e2 ♘xg3 19.hxg3 a6 20.a4

♗c8 21.0–0 f5 22.♕d2 ♗d7 23.♖b1 ♖dc8 24.b4± M. Gurevich – Gelashvili, Izmir 2003) 17.♗e2 ♘xg3 18.hxg3 exd5 19.♘xd5 ♗xd5 20.♖xd5 ♕e6 (M.Gurevich – Mchedlishvili, Istanbul 2003) 21.g4!?↑.

14...cxd4

It is too dangerous for Black to capture the pawn now, because after 14...♗xg2 15.♖g1 ♗c6 16.e4!?↑ White has the initiative.

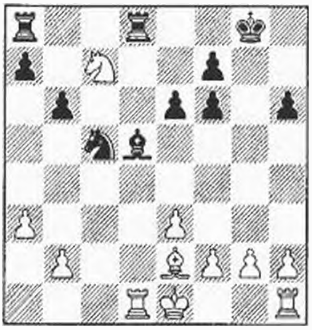
15.♕xd4 ♘c5 16.♗xf6

Bareev simplifies to an endgame, but he could have tried to go on playing keeping the queens on the board, for example: 16.0–0 ♘b3 17.♕d3 ♖ac8 18.♕c2.

16...♕xf6 17.♕xf6 gxf6 18.♘b5

The redeployment of the rook to the kingside is not promising White much: 18.♖d4 ♘b3 19.♖h4 ♔g7 20.♔d1 d5 21.♔c2 ♘a5 22.cxd5 ♗xd5 23.♘xd5 ♖xd5 24.♖d1 ♖c8+ 25.♔b1 ♖cd8 26.♖xd5 ♖xd5= Bareev – Leko, Monaco 2003.

18...d5 19.cxd5 ♗xd5 20.♘c7



20...♗b3!

This is the best for Black. In case of 20...♖ac8 21.♘xd5 ♖xd5 22.♖xd5 exd5 23.0–0 White had some more chances to go on playing for a win.

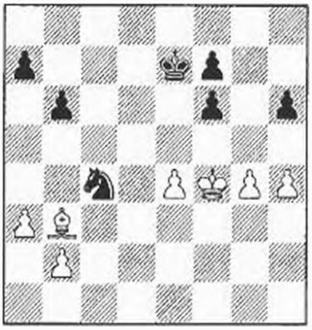
21.♘xa8 ♗xd1 22.♗xd1 ♖xa8

Black managed to equalize and it is now hardly possible to beat Karpov in a position like that.

23.♗c2 ♖c8 24.♔d2 ♔f8 25.g4 ♘b7 26.♖g1 ♘d6 27.♗d3 ♖c5

Black's only weakness – the h6-pawn stops him from going into a rook and pawn endgame (for example after 27...♘c4+ 28.♗xc4 ♖xc4 29.f4±). He exchanges the rooks instead and in the arising endgame of a bishop against a knight White cannot exploit the weakness on h6 at all.

28.f3 ♔e7 29.h4 ♖c8 30.f4 ♖c5 31.♔e2 ♖c8 32.e4 e5 33.♔e3 exf4+ 34.♔xf4 ♖c5 35.♖g2 ♖c1 36.♖c2 ♖xc2 37.♗xc2 ♘c4 38.♗b3



38...♘e5

Of course Black does not need to capture on b2, because after 38...♘xb2?! 39.♔e3 b5 40.♔d4 ♔d6 (White was threatening to go into a king and pawn endgame.) 41.♗xf7 White still has some winning chances.

39.♗d5 a5 40.b3 ♘d3+ 41.♔e3 ♘e5 42.♔f4 ♘g6+ 43.♔g3 ♘f8 44.a4 ♘g6 45.♗c4 ♘f8 46.♔g2 ♘g6 47.♔h3 ♘f4+ 48.♔g3 ♘g6 49.♗d5 ♘f8 50.♔g2 ♘g6 51.♔g3 ♘f8 52.♔f3 ♘g6 53.h5 ♘e5+ 54.♔f4 ♘d3+ 55.♔f5 ♘b4 56.♗b7 ♘c2

57.♔f4 ♘d4 58.♗d5 ♘e6+ 59.♔f5 ♘d4+ 60.♔f4 ♘e6+ ½ – ½

Bareev continued to manoeuvre but finally had to comply with the inevitable draw. It turned out to be the only one in that round!

65 B48

Grischuk – Ju.Polgar

Round 10 23.01

Notes by S. Shipov

Alexander plays very successfully against Judit in general. This time the chess-queen proved to be a match for the young player's sword.

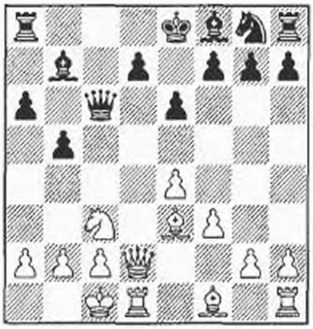
1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘c6 5.♘c3 ♕c7 6.♗e3 a6 7.♕d2

This is a contemporary treatment of the Paulsen variation. White castles long unperturbed by Black's excellent attacking prospects on the queenside.

7..b5

Black plays more often here 7...♘f6 8.0–0–0 ♗b4.

8.♘xc6 ♕xc6 9.f3 ♗b7 10.0–0–0



10...♘e7

Judit is obviously trying to deviate from the standard positions. Black usually develops this knight to f6.

11.♔b1

This novelty has a solid foundation, because that move is useful in nearly 99% of the arising positions. White can choose his method of attack depending on Black's further actions. After 11.♗d3 ♘g6 12.f4 ♗b4 13.a3 ♗xc3, two fearless opponents agreed to a draw, Beshukov – Godes, Orel 1992.

11...♘g6

This placement of the knight simply provokes White's attack.

12.h4!

The game resembles some lines of the popular English Attack – a variation of the Sicilian of which Sasha is considered to be a connoisseur.

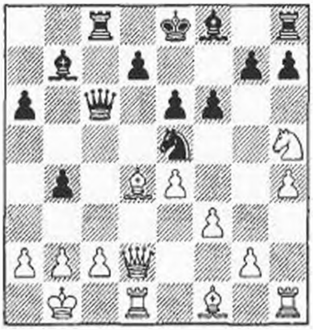
12...b4 13.♘e2

The risky sacrifice 13.♘d5 is not working here – 13...exd5 14.exd5 ♕d6 15.h5 ♘e5 and Black's position is solid.

13...♘e5 14.♘f4 ♖c8 15.♗d4 f6

Black plays in the spirit of the Paulsen variation – keeping the pawn on d7 and preserving the scope of action of the king's bishop along the a3–f8 diagonal. After 15...d6 16.♘h5 Black can hardly complete his development.

16.♘h5



The position seems to be really dangerous for Black. Should White complete his development his attack will be irresistible.

16...♕d6!?

This manoeuvre is rather unusual for the Sicilian. Black is threatening to play ♘e5–c6 forcing some favourable exchanges.

17.♕e1 ♕c7

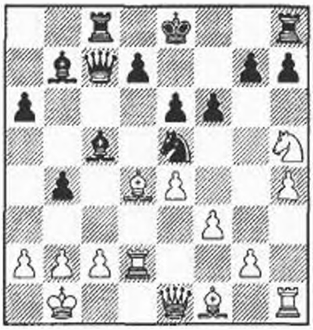
The weakness of the c2–square has been emphasized.

18.♖d2

White had better continue dancing with his queen with 18.♕f2!?

18...♗c5!?

This turned out to be a very well calculated...no, not combination, but provocation!



19.♘xg7+!

Oh, no – Grischuk will not shun interesting complications.

19...♔e7

It is worse for Black to play 19...♔f7 20.♗xc5 ♕xc5 21.f4! ♘c6 22.♖xd7+ ♘e7 23.♗d3 ♗c6 24.♖xe7+ ♕xe7 25.♘h5 – and White has two pawns for the exchange and a strong attack.

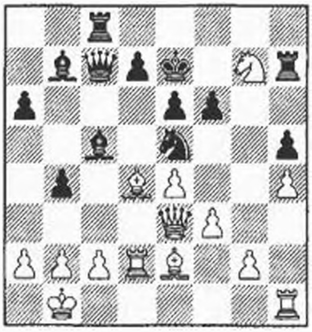
20.♕e3

White could have played the calm 20.♗xc5+ ♕xc5 21.♘h5, and if Black recaptures his pawn with 21...♘xf3?! 22.gxf3 ♕xh5 White plays 23.♕g3! and has a powerful initiative threatening to penetrate with the queen to d6 or g7.

20...h5!

The adventurous knight will not return safely...

21.♗e2 ♖h7



This is the critical moment of the game.

22.♘xh5

I think 22.f4! here was much more dangerous for Black, for example 22...♗xd4 (or 22...♘g4 23.♗xg4 hxg4 24.♖hd1 ♗xd4 25.♕xd4 ♖xg7 26.♕xd7+ ♔f8 27.♕xe6 and White has a deadly initiative, 24.e5!? is also worth considering) 23.♕xd4 ♘c6 24.♕c5+ d6 25.♘f5+! (This knight is worthy of recruiting in the national guard – it is ready to perish, but never surrender!) 25...exf5 26.♕xf5 ♖g7 and now after say 27.♗c4 – White has a superb compensation for the knight.

22...♖xh5 23.f4

The line 23.♗xc5+ ♕xc5 24.♕xc5+ ♖xc5 25.f4 ♘c4 26.♖d4 e5 was leading to a complicated endgame with approximately equal chances.

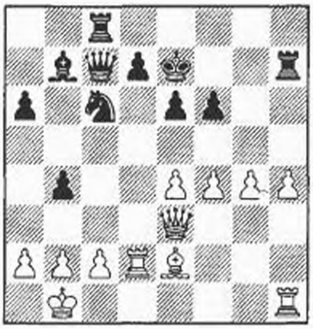
23...♗xd4 24.♕xd4 ♘c6!

And White has no check on c5!

25.♕e3

While now after 25.♕xd7+ ♕xd7 26.♖xd7+ ♔xd7 27.♗xh5, Black is slightly better in the endgame.

25...♖h7 26.g4



The position is extremely complex just like before. White has only two pawns for the knight, but he still has some initiative. The couple of passed pawns on the kingside are potentially dangerous.

26...♖g8 27.g5?!

I think it was wrong to surrender to the opponent the key e5-outpost. It was more in the spirit of the position to play 27.♖hd1 ♖xh4 (27...♖d8 28.g5!) 28.g5 fxg5 29.♕c5+ ♔e8 30.f5! – and Black could easily get lost in a situation like that.

27...fxg5 28.fxg5 ♕e5! 29.♖dd1 ♔d8

The adversaries were probably in a time-trouble already.

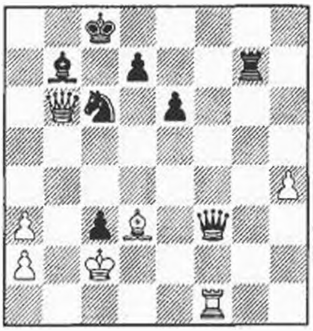
30.♕b6+ ♔c8 31.♕f2?

White loses the logical thread of the game. It was much more stubborn to play 31.♗xa6 ♗xa6 32.♕xa6+ ♔c7 33.♕d3.

31...a5! 32.♖hg1 a4! 33.g6 a3!

Judit put into action her attacking plan quite successfully. Black has a decisive advantage now.

34.c3 ♖h6 35.g7 bxc3 36.bxa3 ♖f6 37.♕b6 ♖f7 38.♖g5 ♕xe4+ 39.♗d3 ♕f3 40.♔c2 ♖gxg7 41.♖xg7 ♖xg7 42.♖f1



White regains his sacrificed piece now, but the black pawns in the centre provide Black with a winning advantage in the endgame.

42...♖g2+ 43.♔c1 ♖b2! 44.♕xb7+ ♔xb7 45.♖xf3 ♖h2 46.♖f4 d5 47.h5 e5 0–1

Grischuk played in his typical enterprising fighting spirit and had considerable chances for success, but... Maybe the Moscow player was not in his best form at that moment, since he missed his best chances in the tactical complications. Nevertheless we have to qualify Judit Polgar's ingenuity and nerve as absolutely superb!

66 C71

Ivanchuk – Timman

Round 10 23.01

Notes by S. Ivanov

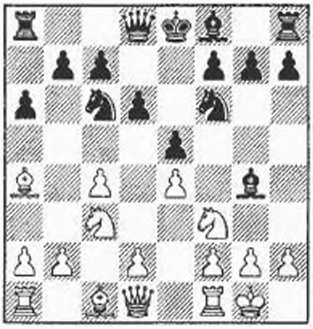
1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗a4 d6 5.0–0 ♗d7

This is a rather ancient variation of the Ruy Lopez – The Steinitz Defence

Deferred. Black's most principled move here is considered to be 5...♗g4.

6.c4 ♘f6 7.♘c3 ♗g4?!

This strange move looks like a loss of a tempo. It is probably better to play 7...♗e7 8.d4 exd4 9.♘xd4 ♘xd4 10.♗xd7+ ♘xd7 11.♕xd4 ♗f6 12.♕e3 0–0 13.♗d2 ♖e8 with an approximately equal position, Keres – Gligoric, Los Angeles 1963.



8.d4!?

Ivanchuk decided to play something really original. White, in the game Romanishin – Smyslov, Hastings 1976, played simply 8.h3 ♗xf3 9.♕xf3 g6 10.d4! ♘d7 (10...exd4? 11.♘d5+–) 11.dxe5 ♘dxe5 12.♕e2 ♗g7 13.♗e3 0–0 14.♖ad1 and had a clear advantage.

8...exd4 9.♘e2

After the blunder 9.♕xd4? b5! White suddenly loses a piece.

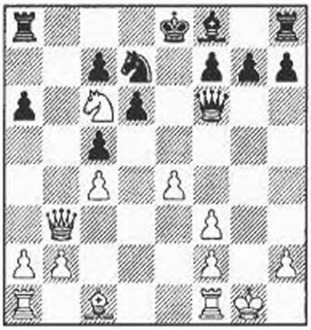
9...♗xf3 10.gxf3 ♘d7

The pin of the knight on c6 is very annoying for Black and he tries to get rid of it as soon as possible. After 10...♗e7 11.♘xd4 Black still has plenty of problems to solve.

11.♗xc6 bxc6 12.♘xd4 c5 13.♘c6 ♕f6

White's knight on c6 is extremely powerful, nevertheless if Black manages to complete his development successfully (♗e7, 0–0), he will have a playable position.

14.♕b3



14...♖c8?

Black is essentially losing the game in one move. He had to play instead 14...♘b6 15.♕d3 (after 15.a4 Black has 15...♕e6 16.a5 ♕xc4!) 15...♕e6 16.b3 ♕d7 (it is important to repel the knight from c6) 17.♘a5 ♗e7 with an about equal position.

15.♕b7 ♘b6 16.a4!

This is simple and natural. After the removal of the black knight from b6 Black's position crumbles away.

16...d5

This desperate attempt to counterattack is parried easily by White. Timman probably relied on 16...♕xf3, but he underestimated the resource 17.♖a3! ♕g4+ 18.♖g3 ♕e6 19.b3 and Black is completely tied up. He could have tried to prolong the resistance with 16...♕e6, but after 17.a5 ♘xc4 18.♕xa6 ♗e7 19.♖a4! ♘e5 20.♘xe5 dxe5 21.♕xe6 fxe6 22.♗e3 Black can hardly save the arising endgame.

17.a5 ♗d6 18.axb6!

Ivanchuk is not afraid of phantoms! He captures the piece and Black is incapable of creating any dangerous threats.

18...0–0 19.e5 ♕g6+ 20.♔h1 ♕d3 21.♗e3 1–0

67 **A58**

Kramnik – Topalov

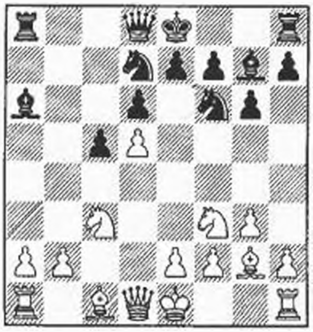
Round 10 23.01

Notes by S. Ivanov

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 b5

Vesselin Topalov was definitely in a fighting spirit and decided to use his most aggressive opening weapon – the Volga-Benko Gambit.

4.cxb5 a6 5.bxa6 g6 6.♘c3 ♗xa6 7.g3 d6 8.♗g2 ♘bd7 9.♘f3 ♗g7



10.♖b1!?

Kramnik played the most fashionable set–up. We must emphasize that the move 10.♖b1 should precede White's castling, because 10.0–0 can be countered with 10...♘b6! 11.♖b1 (11.b3 is not possible, because after 11...♘fxd5 the rook on a1 is hanging) 11...♗b7 12.♘h4 ♘c4!, and White fails to develop his queenside in the optimal fashion. Now (after 10.♖b1) in case of 10...♘b6 White can play the simple 11.b3 and the manoeuvre with the knight to c4 has been prevented.

10...0–0 11.0–0 ♕a5

Black has several possible plans in that position, for example: 11...♘b6 12.b3 ♖a7 followed by ♕a8 attacking the d5-pawn, or 12...♗b7 13.♘h4 ♖a5 and only then ♕a8. Topalov chooses the most standard set-up in the Volga Gambit: 11...♕a5 intending 12...♖fb8 followed by ♘e8-c7.

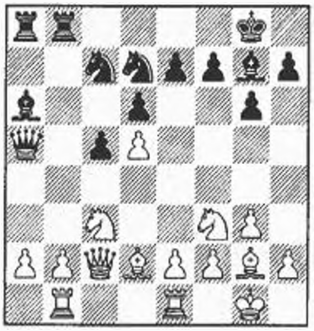
12.♗d2 ♖fb8 13.♕c2 ♘e8

Black has some other possibilities too: 13...♘b6 14.b3 ♕a3 15.♗c1 ♕a5 16.♖d1 ♗c8 17.a4 ♗f5 18.e4 ♗g4 19.h3 ♗d7 20.♗f1± Lazarev – Calzetta, Lisbon 2001; 13...♘g4 14.a4 ♘ge5 15.♘xe5 ♘xe5 16.b3 ♕d8 17.♖fe1 ♖a7 18.h3 ♖ab7 19.♘a2± Kramnik – Van Wely, Monaco 2003.

14.♖fe1

White makes a useful move defending the e2–pawn just in case. It was also interesting to play 14.a4!?, for example: 14...c4 (14...♕b6 15.b3 ♘c7 16.♖fd1±) 15.♘b5 ♕b6 16.♗e3 ♘c5 17.♕xc4 ♗xb5 18.axb5 ♕xb5 19.♕xb5 ♖xb5 20.♘d4 ♖b7 21.b4 ♘a4 22.♖b3± Gustafsson – Szieberth, Budapest 2001.

14...♘c7



15.a4!?

This natural and obvious move is in fact a novelty! White should not allow the move ♘b5 forcing the trade of several pieces which is definitely favourable for Black in this position. White had played 15.e4 before, but after 15...♘b5 16.♘xb5 ♕xb5 Black had good counterchances.

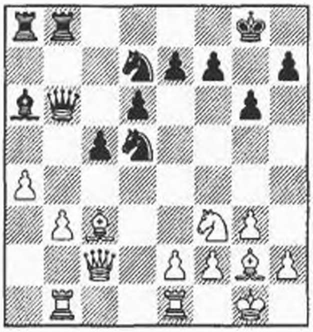
15...♕b6 16.b3

This pawn sacrifice is the logical consequence of White's previous move. He should not allow a black piece to occupy the b3-square: 16.e4?! ♕b3!, and White has problems.

16...♗xc3

Black recovers his pawn but at the expense of his dark squared bishop. After 16...♗b7 17.e4 ♘a6 18.♘a2± he fails to organize any effective counterplay.

17.♗xc3 ♘xd5



18.♘e5!

White had to anticipate the consequences of that move while making his move 15. Now after numerous exchanges the game enters a clearly superior endgame for White.

18...♘xe5

This is Black's only playable answer. He should not try 18...♘xc3? 19.♘xd7 ♕b4 due to 20.♖bc1! ♘xe2+ 21.♖xe2 ♗xe2 22.♘xb8+–, and White remains with extra material. It is also not good for Black to play: 18...♘7f6 19.♘c4 ♕a7 20.♗xf6±.

19.♗xd5 ♗b7

It is too dangerous for Black to try 19...♘c6 (19...♖a7 20.b4!) – and White's couple of attacking bishops are too strong. See a recent example: 20.♕e4 ♗b7 21.♕f4 ♖f8 22.h4 e5 23.♕f6 ♕d8 24.♕f3 ♕c7 25.h5 ♔g7? (⌓25...♘d4) 26.h6+ ♔xh6 27.♕f6, Matthiesen – Vinter Schou, Aarhus 2003, and Black had to resign due to the unavoidable checkmate.

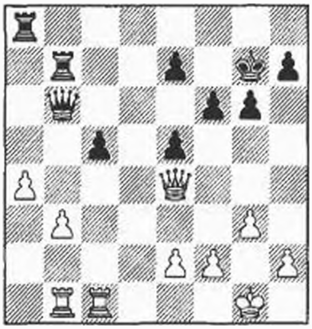
20.♗xb7 ♖xb7 21.♗xe5 dxe5 22.♖ec1

The minor pieces disappeared from the board and the game entered a complex endgame with heavy pieces. White has much better chances because of his superior pawn structure. Nevertheless it is usually rather difficult to win a position like that.

22...f6 23.♕e4

But not 23.♕xc5? ♕xc5 24.♖xc5 ♖xa4=.

23...♔g7



24.♖c3!

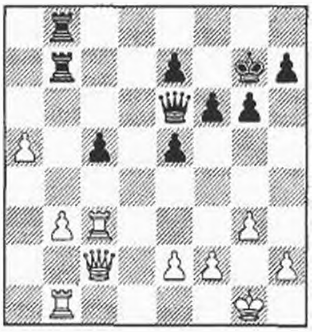
This is a very purposeful regrouping of forces. The queen is placed behind the rook and the b3 pawn is protected additionally and the c5-pawn is attacked. Black can answer the immediate 24.♖xc5? with the counterstrike 24...♖xa4!

24...♖ab8 25.♕c2 ♕e6

But not 25...♖c7? 26.b4, and Black's defence crumbles.

26.a5

White intends to push forward the passed a-pawn as far as possible before exchanging his b3-pawn for the black c5-pawn.



26...♔f7

It was better for Black to play here 26...♖b5 – because his king comes under a check on f7 subsequently.

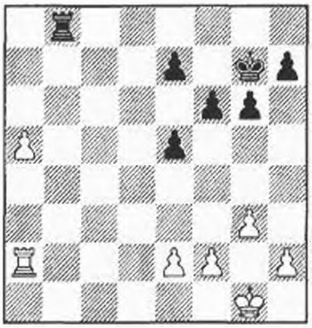
27.♖a1 ♖xb3 28.♖xb3 ♕xb3 29.♕xc5 ♕b2 30.♕c4+ ♔g7 31.♕a2!?

31.♖a2 seemed attractive, but after 31...♕b1+ 32.♔g2 ♕d1! 33.a6 ♖b1⇄ Black had some serious counterplay.

31...♕xa2

Black probably needed to preserve the queens – 31...♕c3!?, although even then after 32.a6 ♖b2 33.♕a4! ♖xe2 (33...♖b4 34.♕d1! ♖d4 35.♕f1 ♖d8 36.a7±) 34.a7 ♕f3 35.♖f1 ♕a8 36.♕a3! ♔h6 (36...♔f7 37.♕b3 ♔g7 38.♕b8+–; 36...♔f8 37.♖b1+–) 37.♖a1 ♖c2 38.♖c1!± White preserves his advantage mostly due to his advanced passed pawn (analysis of V.Kramnik).

32.♖xa2±



There arose a rook and pawn endgame that is quite enjoyable for White. Black will hardly be able to capture the a-pawn, because the king and pawn endgame will be hopeless for him. Black's drawing chances should be based mostly on his counterplay on the kingside, because he has an extra pawn there, doubled though.

32...♖a8 33.a6 ♖a7 34.♔g2 ♔f7

Black had to necessarily restrict the mobility of the white king with: 34...e4!?

35.♔f3 ♔e6 36.g4!

This is quite correct. White needs some breathing space! Black's h or g–pawns might become weak sometime in the future.

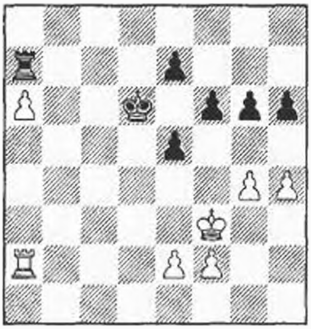
36...♔d6

Or 36...♔d5 37.♖a5+ (facilitating the march forward of the king) 37...♔c6 38.♔e4 ♔d6 (38...♔b6 39.♖a3 ♖xa6 40.♖xa6+ ♔xa6 41.♔d5+–; 38...e6 39.g5+–; 38...h6 39.h4 e6 40.g5+–) 39.h4, and White still has the initiative.

37.h4 h6

It was better for Black to play

37...h5 38.gxh5 (38.g5!?) 38...gxh5 39.♔e4 e6, and Black can still defend (recommended by V.Kramnik).



38.g5!

Kramnik is playing that endgame really instructively. The weakness on g6 has been fixed.

38...hxg5 39.hxg5 f5

It is understandable that 39... fg5? 40.♔g4 is losing immediately, while in case of 39...♔c6 40.♔e4 ♔b6 41.gxf6 exf6 42.♔d5... and ♔e6, White penetrates decisively with his king.

40.e4 e6 41.♖a5!

White is threatening now to march with his king to the a-pawn and Topalov finds the only playable defence.

41...♔c7 42.♔e3

V.Kramnik had an interesting idea here: 42.♔e2!?. After 42...♔b8 (42...♔c8 43.♔d3) 43.♔e3! Black is in something like a zugzwang, for example: 43...♔a8 (43...♔c7 44.♔d3) 44.♖xe5 ♖xa6 45. ♖b5! – and Black's defence without the king will be extremely difficult despite the material equality.

42...♔b8!?

Vesselin defends heroically. After the black king goes to b8 his rook will be free for action. He was losing immediately after 42...♔d6 43.♔d3 ♔c7 44.♔c4 fxe4 45.♔c5+–.

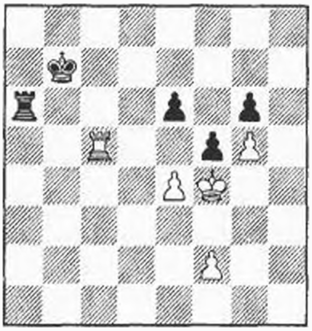
43.♖xe5

Black's idea was to counter 43.♔d3 with 43... ♖d7+!. Kramnik decided to part with his a-pawn in order to remain with an extra pawn on the other side of the board.

43...♖xa6 44.♖c5

White needs to restrict the movement of the black king.

44...♔b7 45.♔f4



45...♔b6

If Black plays immediately 45...fxe4 46.♔xe4 ♖a2, White wins with 47.f4 ♖e2+ 48.♔d4 ♖e1 49.♖e5 ♖f1 50.♖e4 ♔c7 51.♔e5 ♔d7 52.♔f6+–

46.♖c8 fxe4

Black must exchange pawns otherwise there would follow 46...♔b7 47.♖g8 fxe4 48.♖xg6 ♔c7 49.♔e5+–.

47.♔xe4

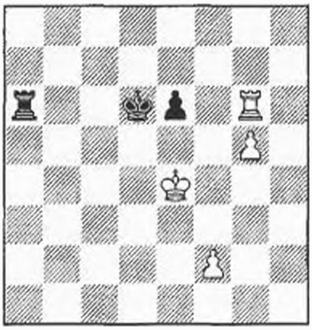
While now 47.♖g8 was not so clear after: 47...♔c6 48.♖xg6 ♔d7!? – and the black king copes with the g-pawn.

47...♔b7 48.♖g8

After 48.♖c5 Black organizes his defence along the 5th rank with: 48... ♔b6 49.♖c1 ♖a5 50.f4 ♔b7. White will have to play then: 51.♖h1 ♔c6

52.♖h6 ♔d6 53.♖xg6 ♖a4+, and there arises the same position as in the game.

48...♔c6 49.♖xg6 ♔d6



This is the first critical moment of this interesting endgame.

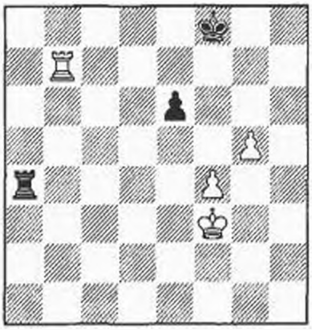
50.f4?

This move seems to be the most natural, but strangely enough White misses the winning line with it. It is fair to say that it is not so easy to find over the board the following problem-like manoeuvre: 50.♖g7! ♖a4+ 51.♔f3 e5 (51...♔e5 52.♖f7+-) 52.♖f7 ♔e6 53.♖f6+ ♔e7 54.♔g3 ♖b4 55.♔h3!! ♖a4 56.♖f3! This is a remarkable idea, but in fact it is all so simple – according to the good old rules the rook is placed behind the passed pawn! 56...♖b4 57.g6 ♖b6 58.g7 ♖b8 (58...♖h6+ 59.♔g2 ♖g6+ 60.♖g3 ♖xg3+ 61.♔xg3+-) 59.♖g3 ♔f7 (59...♖g8 60.♖g5 ♔f6 61.♔g4+-) 60.g8♕+! ♖xg8 61.♖xg8 ♔xg8 62.♔g4+- (recommended by V.Kramnik). I think that the position prior to White's move 50 is a real study!

50...♖a4+ 51.♔f3 ♔e7 52.♖g7+

White does not achieve anything with 52.♖f6 ♖b4 Δ53.♔g4 e5.

52...♔f8 53.♖b7



This is the second (and last) critical position.

53...♖c4?

This turns out to be the fatal mistake. After this move White manages to push his pawn to g6 and obtains a leeway forward for the penetration of his king. Black had to play 53...♖a1!, to be able to attack with the rook from behind. There might follow: 54.♔g4 (54.g6? ♖g1; 54.♔e4 ♖e1+ 55.♔d4 ♔g8, and White cannot improve his position) 54...♖g1+ (it is also interesting for Black to play 54...♖a4!? threatening 55...e5) 55.♔h5 ♖f1 56.♔h6 (56.♖b4 ♔g7; 56.♖b8+ ♔g7=) 56...♖xf4 57.♖b8+ ♔e7 58.g6 ♖h4+ 59.♔g5 (59.♔g7 e5⇄) 59...♖h1 60.g7 ♖g1+ 61.♔h6 ♖h1+ 62.♔g6 ♖g1+ 63.♔h7 ♖h1+ 64.♔g8 and now Black has two possible ways of defending:

1) 64...e5 65.♖b7+ ♔e6! 66.♔f8 ♖f1+ 67.♔e8 ♖g1 68.♖b6+ ♔f5! (68...♔d5? 69.♔f7 ♖xg7+ 70.♔xg7 e4 71.♔f6+-) 69.♔f7 ♖xg7+ (69...e4? 70.♖f6+ ♔e5 71.♖g6) 70.♔xg7 e4=;

2) 64...♖h2! This is the simplest. Black intends not to let the White king out of the g8–square. 65.♖b7+ ♔e8 66.♖a7 ♖h1= (analysis of V.Kramnik)

54.g6!

Black is beyond salvation now.

54...♖c1

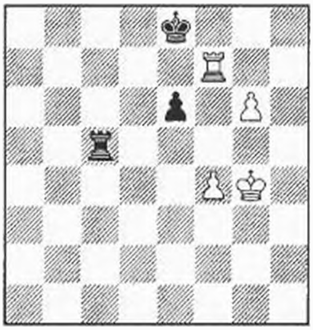
Unfortunately it is already too late. If Black continues to manoeuvre with his rook along the 4th rank: 54...♖a4, White breaks his defence with the help of 55.♖f7+! and now 55...♔e8 (55...♔g8 56.♖e7 ♖a6 57.♔e4 ♔f8 58.♖f7+ ♔g8 59.♔e5+–) 56.♔g4 e5 57.♔g5 57...♖xf4 (57...exf4 58.♖f5 ♔e7 59.g7 ♖a1 60. ♖xf4+–) 58.♖xf4 exf4 59.♔h6! f3 (59...♔f8 60.♔h7) 60.g7 ♔f7 61.♔h7+–

55.♔g4 ♖c5

Contrary to the line 53...♖a1!, White's pawn now is on g6 and this tempo is absolutely decisive. Black does not save the game with 55...♖g1+ 56.♔h5 ♖g2 (56...♖f1 57.♔h6; 56...♔g8 57.♔h6 ♖h1+ 58.♔g5+–) 57.♔h6 ♖h2+ 58.♔g5 ♖f2 59.f5! ♖xf5+ (59...exf5 60.g7+ ♔g8 61.♔f6+–) 60.♔h6 ♖f6 61.♔h7+–

56.♖f7+ ♔e8

Or 56...♔g8 57.♖e7 ♖c6 58.♔g5+–



57.f5! 1–0

This is the decisive breakthroug. After 57...exf5+ 58.♖xf5 ♖c1 59.♔g5 ♖h1 (59...♔e7 60.g7+–) 60.g7 ♔e7 61.♔g6 ♖g1+ 62.♔h7 ♖h1+ 63.♔g8 there arises a theoretically winning position, therefore Black resigned.

68 E92

Krasenkow – Radjabov

Round 10 23.01

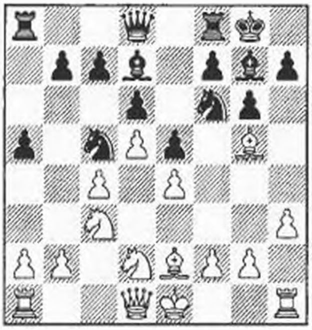
Notes by S. Ivanov

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 ♗g7 4.e4 d6 5.♘f3 0–0 6.h3

This is the favourite system of Michal Krasenkow against the King's Indian Defence. The famous Danish grandmaster Bent Larsen contributed a lot to its theoretical development in the past.

6...e5 7.d5 a5 8.♗g5 ♘a6 9.♗e2 ♘c5 10.♘d2 ♗d7

The other possible plan is to undermine White's centre immediately with 10...c6.



11.0–0

White could now show some aggressive intentions with 11.g4!?, preventing Black's counterplay on the kingside, but he preferred to choose a calmer path.

11...h6 12.♗e3

After 12.♗h4 Black can play 12...♕e8 followed by ♘f6-h7 and f7-f5.

12...♘h7!?

This is the proper reaction for Black – to prepare f7-f5 promptly.

13.♔h2

White makes a useful prophylactic move anticipating Black's offensive on the kingside. There were games before like 13.♘b3 b6 14.♘xc5 bxc5 15.♕d2 h5 16.a3 a4 17.b4 axb3 18.♖fb1 f5 19.f3 f4 20.♗f2 g5 21.♕d1 ♕c8 22.♖xb3 ♘f6 with a complicated game, Grivas – Kotronias, Glyfada 1995.

13...♘g5 14.f3

White will have to play ♘b3 sooner or later (Black's knight on c5 is cementing his queenside); therefore the e4-pawn needs some additional protection.

14...♕e7 15.♘b3 ♘xb3

The alternative is the move ...b6.

16.♕xb3 b6 17.♕c2 f5

Black finally managed to accomplish this programme-move.

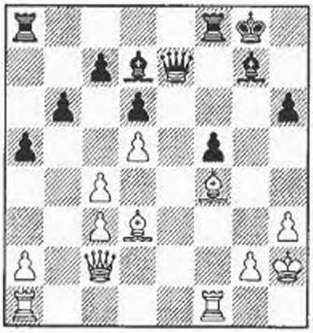
18.exf5 gxf5 19.f4

White's reaction is also standard, not allowing the opponent to proceed with his pawn offensive on the kingside.

19...exf4 20.♗xf4 ♘e4 21.♗d3

White would like to prevent the doubling of his pawns, but after 21.♘xe4 fxe4 Black's pawn on e4 would be very powerful.

21...♘xc3 22.bxc3



The arising position is abundant with pawn weaknesses – White has weak pawns on c3 and c4 and Black on f5. The difference is that contrary to his opponent White can attack the enemy weakness and that provides him with slightly better chances.

22...♗e5 23.g3 ♕f6 24.♖ac1

White must defend once in a while.

24...♖ae8 25.♕d2 ♔g7 26.♖f3 ♗xf4?!

Black probably must avoid the exchange of the dark-squared bishops, because then White did not have to worry about his c3-pawn. On the other hand Black had no active plan and needed to only wait and see what White had in mind.

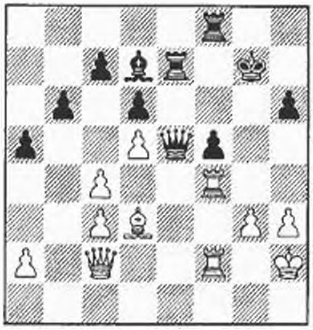
27.♖xf4 ♕e5 28.♖cf1

White's rook can attack directly the weak pawn on f5, but that does not prove to be especially effective indeed.

28...♖e7 29.♕c2 ♖f6 30.♖1f2

But not 30.♗xf5? ♗xf5 31.♖xf5 ♕e2+∓.

30...♖f8



31.h4

White does not achieve anything much after 31.♗xf5 ♗xf5 32.♖xf5 ♖xf5 33.♖xf5 ♕e2+ 34.♖f2 ♕xc4=.

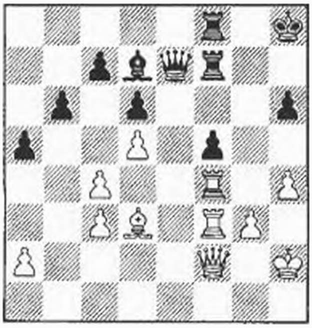
31...♖ef7 32.♔g2 ♔h8 33.♕d2 ♕g7 34.♖2f3 ♖f6 35.♕f2

White finally found a concrete plan after some hesitation. He will double his heavy pieces along the f-file and prepare g3-g4.

35...♕e7 36.♔f1 ♕g7 37.♔g2

Presently 37.g4 is still not dangerous for Black due to 37...fxg4 38.♖xf6 gxf3∞.

37...♕e7 38.♔h2 ♖6f7



There were only two moves left until the time–control and White decided to push his g–pawn...

39.g4?!

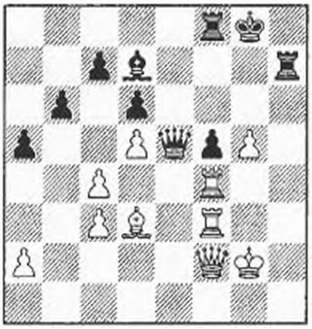
This seemed to be very strong because 39...fg4 40.♖f7 did not work for Black. Unfortunately there came a cold shower for White... It was much stronger instead to simply capture that pawn: 39.♗xf5, and after the numerous exchanges – 39...♗xf5 40.♖xf5 ♖xf5 41.♖xf5 ♖xf5 42.♕xf5 ♕e2+ 43.♔h3 ♕xc4 44.♕f3 a4 45.h5 the arising endgame would be very unpleasant for Black – note the difference in the placement of the two kings.

39...♕e5!

This move was a complete surprise for White – it turned out that the pawn is untouchable.

40.g5 hxg5 41.hxg5 ♖h7+ 42.♔g2 ♔g8

In case of 42...♖g8 43.♖g3 ♖h5 White has 44.♗e2.



43.♕g3?

It was evident that Krasenkow was very disappointed with what had happened and he began to play rather imprecisely. His position was not worse at all and he had to play instead 43.♖e3 ♕h8 44.♕g3 ♕g7 45.♖h4 with an approximately equal position. White now crumbles literally in a couple of moves.

43...♖h5 44.♗b1 ♖f7

It was also OK to play 44...♕g7+, and White loses the g5-pawn.

45.♔f2 ♖e7 46.♖e3 ♕xe3+ 47.♕xe3 ♖h2+ 48.♔g3 ♖xe3+ 49.♔xh2 ♖xc3 50.♗xf5 ♗xf5 51.♖xf5 ♖xc4–+

The rook and pawn endgame is totally hopeless for White. He cannot protect his numerous weaknesses.

52.♔g3 ♔g7 53.♖f6 ♖d4 54.♖e6 ♖xd5 55.♖e7+ ♔g6 56.♖xc7 ♔xg5 57.♔f3 ♔f5 58.♔e3 ♔e6 59.a4 ♖h5 60.♖b7 ♖h3+ 61.♔d4 0–1

69 **B31**

Ponomariov – Van Wely

Round 10 23.01

Notes by S. Ivanov

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 g6 4.

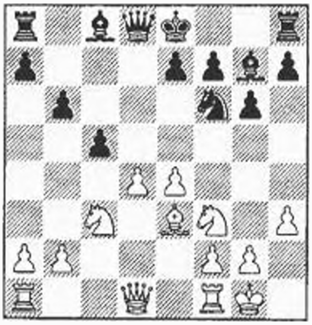
♗xc6 dxc6 5.h3 ♗g7 6.d3 ♘f6 7.♘c3 c4

Van Wely is following his own game against Grischuk in round one. The usual move here is 7...0–0.

8.0–0

It is not very easy to understand why White did not capture that pawn. In the game Yemelin – Shvedov, Novgorod 1999, White simply took it: 8. dxc4 ♕xd1+ 9.♔xd1 ♗e6 10.c5 0–0–0+ 11.♔e1 ♘d7 12.♗e3 ♘e5 13.♘d4 and won subsequently.

8...cxd3 9.cxd3 c5 10.♗e3 b6 11.d4



11...♗b7

Van Wely was the first to deviate from the game with Grischuk that we already mentioned, which continued: 11...cxd4 12.♗xd4 0–0. Black must have been more than happy with the outcome of the opening battle.

12.d5 0–0 13.♕b3 ♕c8 14.♖ad1

The arising position resembles the Gruenfeld Defence a little bit.

14...e6 15.♗g5!?

This is keeping the tension. After 15.dxe6 ♕xe6 Black's position is quite playable.

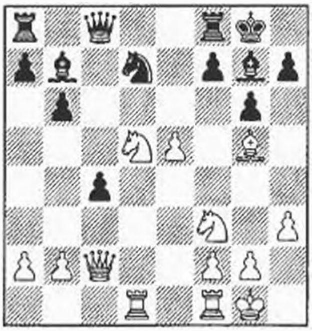
15...exd5 16.e5 c4

After 16...♘e4 17.♘xd5 ♗xd5 18. ♕xd5 ♘xg5 19.♘xg5 White has the initiative.

17.♕c2 ♘d7

Now 17...♘e4 was already quite possible. For example: 18.♘xd5 ♗xd5 19.♖xd5 ♘xg5 20.♘xg5 ♕c6!? 21.♖fd1 ♖ae8 22.♘f3 (22.f4 f6 23.exf6 ♖xf6) 22...♖e7 and the position is approximately equal.

18.♘xd5



18...♔h8?!

I consider that move to be the main culprit for Black's problems in this game. He had to play instead 18... ♖e8!?. After 19.♘e7+ ♖xe7 20.♗xe7 Black has two possibilities: the natural 20...♕e8 21.♗f6 ♗xf3 22.gxf3 ♘xe5 23.♗xg7 ♘xf3+! 24.♔g2 (24.♔h1 ♕e6) 24...♕c6 25.♔g3! ♘g5 26.f4 ♘e4+ 27.♔h2 ♔xg7 28.♖d4 ♘d6 29.♖fd1± and White is only slightly better; or the queen sacrifice: 20...♗xf3 21.gxf3 ♘xe5 (21...♕e8 22.♗f6±; 21...♕b7 22.♕xc4 ♘xe5 23.♕d5±) 22.♖d8+ ♕xd8 23.♗xd8 ♖xd8 – and White can hardly win that position.

19.♕c3 ♖e8

The attractive 19...♘xe5 20.♘xe5 ♕e6 will be countered with 21.♘f6! ♗xf6 22.♗xf6+ ♕xf6 23.♖d6! ♕g7 24.♖d7 ♗a6 25.♘xf7+ ♔g8 26.♕xg7+ ♔xg7 27.♘g5+, and White has a clear advantage in that endgame.

20.♗f6!

This strong move emphasizes White's edge.

20...♘xf6

Or 20...♗xf6 21.exf6 ♕c5 (21...♗xd5 22.♖xd5± ♕c6? 23.♕d2+-) 22.♘e7 ♖ad8 23.♖fe1±.

21.exf6 ♗f8 22.♘e7!

Ponomariov achieved an almost decisive advantage with this powerful knight penetration. Black is forced to capture on e7 now, because 22...♕c5 23.♘e5+- loses for Black.

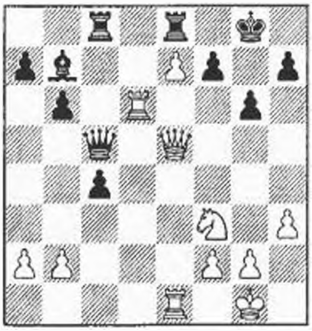
22...♗xe7 23.fxe7+ ♔g8 24.♖fe1

Ponomariov missed now the possibility to organize a winning attack after 24.♘e5! ♖xe7 25.♘g4. There might follow: 25...♖e6 (25...♕f8 26.♘f6+ ♔h8 27.♘d5+ ♔g8 28.♘xe7+ ♕xe7 29.♕xc4 ♕g5 30.♕g4+-) 26.♘h6+ ♔f8 27.♕h8+ ♔e7 28.♕xh7 ♕f8 29.♘xf7 ♕xf7 (29...♕g8 30.♕h4+ ♔xf7 31.♖d7+-) 30.♖d7+-.

24...♕c6 25.♕e5

White's passed e7-pawn should be enough to win for White despite his imprecision.

25...♖ac8 26.♖d6 ♕c5



27.♕f6?

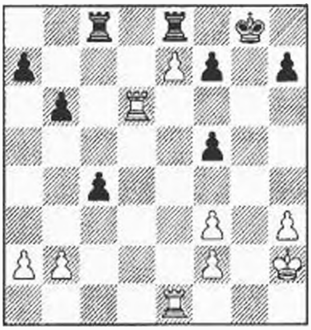
Ponomariov is playing rather hesitantly this part of the game. The simple 27.♕xc5 was winning for White almost by force: 27...♖xc5 (27...bxc5 28.♘d2) 28.♖d8 ♖c8 (28...♗c6 29.♘d4 ♗a4 30.b3) 29.♖ed1 f6 30.♖1d7 and Black loses his bishop in all lines: 30...♗c6 (30...c3 31.♖xb7 cxb2 32.♖xe8+ ♖xe8 33.♘d2 ♔f7 34.♖c7 ♖xe7 35.♖xe7+ ♔xe7 36.♔f1+-) 31.♖xc8 ♗xd7 32.♖d8 c3 (32...♗a4 33.b3 cxb3 34.axb3 ♗b5 35.♘d4+-) 33.♖xd7 (33.bxc3 ♗a4) 33...cxb2 34.♘d2 ♔f7 35.♖c7 ♖xe7 36.♖xe7+ ♔xe7 37.♔f1+-

27...♗xf3 28.gxf3 ♕f5 29.♕xf5 gxf5

Van Wely managed to enter a four rook's endgame in which White is of course better, but he must play very precisely.

30.♔h2

White creates the threat 31.♖g1 followed by ♖d7.



30...h6!?

This is a clever distracting manoeuvre.

31.♖xh6?!

White snatches the bait. It was better to play 31.♔g3!, ignoring the useless pawns. After 31...♔g7 32.♖d7 a5 33.♔f4 f6 34.♖e6↑ White preserves his edge (analysis of Van Wely).

31...♔g7 32.♖d6 f6

Black secured the position of his king at the expense of a pawn and is threatening to capture the advanced e7-pawn.

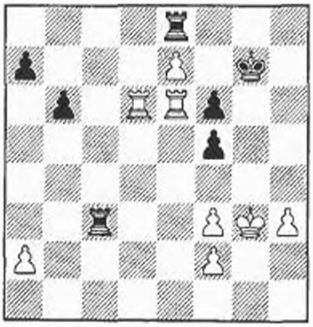
33.♖ee6?!

This is a strange move. This rook will have to retreat after some time. It was better to play 33.♖d7 a5±.

33...c3?

This was the first moment in which Black missed to draw with: 33...♖c7 34.♖c6 (34.♖xf6 ♖exe7 35.♖xf5 ♖e2) 34...♖cxe7 35.♖xe7+ ♖xe7 36.♖xc4 ♖e2=

34.bxc3 ♖xc3 35.♔g3



35...♖a3

Black had to try here 35...♔f7!?, in order to liquidate the dangerous e7–pawn, for example: 36.♖xf6+ ♔xe7 37.♖de6+ ♔d7 38.♖xe8 ♔xe8 39.♖xf5 ♖a3 40.♖e5+ ♔f7 41.♖e2 b5, and White can hardly win that position.

36.♖e2?!

It was correct to play 36.h4! ♖xa2 37.h5.

36...♔f7 37.♖d7 ♖g8+ 38.♔h2

It was not too late for White to even lose: 38.♔f4 ♖a4+ 39.♔xf5?? ♖g5#.

38...♖e8 39.h4 ♖xf3 40.♖xa7 ♖f4 41.♔g3 ♖g4+ 42.♔h3 ♖g1

The other possibility was hopeless for Black 42...♖e4? 43.♖xe4 fxe4 44.h5 f5 45.♔h4 ♔f6 46.a4 f4 (46...♖g8 47.h6) 47.♔g4 e3 48.fxe3 fxe3 49.♔f3+–

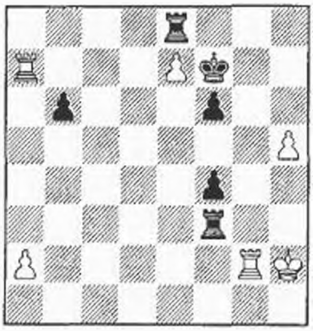
43.f3

White preserved good winning chances after 43.♖b2 ♖eg8 44.e8♕+ ♔xe8 45.♖a8+ ♔f7 46.♖xg8 ♖xg8 47.♖xb6±.

43...f4?!

It was simpler for Black to defend with: 43...♖h1+ 44.♔g3 ♖g8+ 45.♔f2 ♖e8.

44.♔h2 ♖g3 45.♖g2 ♖xf3 46.h5



46...♖d3?

Black now missed his last chance to draw that game with 46...♖f1!, although we have to admit that his choice between 46...♖d3, 46...♖e3 and 46...♖f1 was far from easy. See some of the lines shown by van Wely: 47.h6 f3 48.♖g7+ (48.♖g3 f2 49.♔g2 ♖h1=) 48...♔e6 49.♖a3 (49.♖g1 ♖xg1 50.♔xg1 ♔f7 51.♔f2 ♔g6 52.♔xf3 ♔xh6=) 49...f2 50.♖e3+ ♔d7 51.♖f3 ♖g1 52.♖d3+ (52.♖xf2 ♖xg7 53.hxg7 ♖g8=; 52.♖xg1 fxg1♕+ 53.♔xg1 ♖g8=) 52...♔e6 53.♖e3+ ♔f5! This manoeuvre saves the game – the king manages to stop the h-pawn. (but not 53...♔d7? 54.♖xg1 fxg1♕+ 55.♔xg1) 54.♖xg1 fxg1♕+

55.♔xg1 ♔g6=.

47.h6

White coordinates his forces effectively now and organizes the promotion of the passed h–pawn.

47...f5

Or 47...♖d5 48.♖g7+ ♔e6 49.h7 ♖g5 50.♖xg5 fxg5 51.♔h3 f3 52.♔g3 g4 53.♖a4+–.

48.♖b7 ♖d6 49.♖g7+ ♔f6 50.a4 ♖d2+ 51.♖g2 ♖d6 52.h7 ♔f7

52...♖h8 53.♖e2 ♖xh7+ 54.♔g2+–.

53.♖g8!

This is the decisive penetration.

53...♖h6+ 54.♔g2 ♖g6+

The last fine point – in case of 54...♖xh7 White follows not with 55.♖xe8? (hoping for 55...♔xe8 56.♖b8 ♔e7 57.♖b7) – and after 55...♖g7! 56.♔f3 ♔xe8, Black makes a draw, but with 55.♖f8+! ♖xf8 56.exf8♕+ ♔xf8 57.♖xh7+–.

55.♖xg6 ♔xg6 56.♖xb6+ ♔xh7 57.♖b7 ♔g6 58.a5 ♔f7 59.a6 1–0

70 B12

Shirov – Anand

Round 10 23.01

Notes by M. Notkin

As time goes by Anand has become an increasingly uncomfortable opponent for Shirov. Thus, in Wijk aan Zee Vishy Anand convincingly repels Alexei Shirov's opening onslaught.

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 ♗f5 4.♘c3 e6 5.g4 ♗g6 6.♘ge2 c5 7.♗e3 ♘c6 8.dxc5 ♘xe5

Both players defended this position for Black in the Match of New Century – Russia versus Rest of the World. Shirov against Grischuk played 8...♖c8 while Anand against Motylev tried 8...a6.

9.♘f4

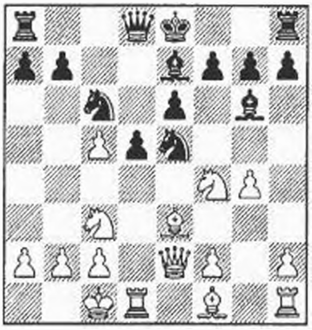
By the way, there was a threat of mate on f3. There is also another defence possible – 9.♘d4.

9...♘e7 10.♕e2

This position is familiar to Alexei. At the World Championship in Moscow he played 10.♗b5+ ♘7c6 11.♕e2, Shirov – Gyimesi, Moscow 2001.

10...♘7c6 11.0–0–0 ♗e7

Poor is 11...♕a5? 12.♗d4! ♘xd4 13.♖xd4 ♘c6 14.♘xe6! fxe6 15.♕xe6+ ♗e7 16.♗b5 and White gained a big advantage in De Vreugt – Kallai, Germany 2001.



12.♘fxd5!?

This sacrifice, which leads to an irrational position, is in Shirov's style. But it was definitely stronger to prepare it with the move 12.h4! and in case of 12...♗xh4 White can choose between the immediate capture on d5 and 13.♘xg6 ♘xg6 14.♘xd5.

12...exd5 13.f4?

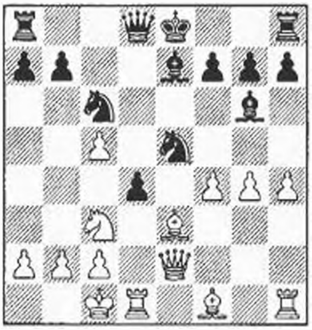
An error, which is probably connected with a miscalculation. After 13.♖xd5 ♕c8 14.h3! White has positional compensation for the piece.

13...d4!

Thanks to this tactical resource Anand maintains his material advantage. Of course, 13...♘d7 14.f5 leads to White's clear advantage.

14.h4

It turns out that 14.fxe5 (or 14.f5) is bad in view of 14...♗g5!. Also not viable is 14.♗xd4 ♘d3+! (14...♘xd4? 15.♕xe5) 15.cxd3 ♘xd4 16.♕g2 f6. I guess Alexei overlooked one of these options.



14...♘d3+!

Reminiscent of the move 26...♘e3 from the second round game Topalov – Anand. Also interesting is 14...♗d3 15.cxd3 ♘d7 but after 16.♘e4 dxe3 17.d4! and 18.♕xe3 the knight cannot easily fight against the pawn armada. Bishops are better for this purpose.

15.cxd3 h5

Black rescues his bishop. On 15...dxc3?! White would have replied 16.h5 ♕d5 17.♖h3 ♕xa2 18.bxc3; possibly 15...f6 is stronger, as now the bishop on h7 is temporarily out of play.

16.f5 ♗h7 17.♗d2 dxc3 18.♗xc3

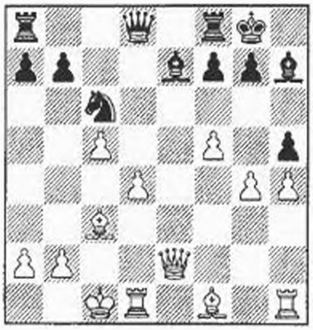
If White could return the pawn to h3 the assessment would have been clearly in his favour. At the World Cup Sasikiran had the good fortune to drive Anand into a similar tragicomic position. After the text-move the h7-"pawn" has a chance to become a bishop again.

18...0–0

Probably 18...hxg4 is not weaker than castling but Vishy's decision is more practical. After the capture on g4 he would have had to have been prepared for at least three replies of his opponent – 19.♕xg4, (19.♗xg7 ♖g8 20.f6; 19.f6 gxf6 20.♕xg4), and 19...♗f6 when the black king was likely to remain in the centre.

19.d4

In case of 19.gxh5 ♗f6 White's initiative would have fizzled out quickly.



19...a5!

An important move. The knight is provided with a post in case of d4-d5. Whereas a2-a3 in many cases does not prevent anything because the capture of the knight on b4 will lead to a dangerous opening of the a-file.

20.a3 ♖e8 21.♕c4?

Better was to retreat to f2 or g2 and reserve the c4-square for the bishop. For example, 21.♕f2 ♕d5 (in case of 21...hxg4 22.d5 ♘b4!? the sacrifice is refused – 23.♗c4!) 22.♗g2 ♕b3 23.♗xc6 (here after 23.d5 strong is

23...♘b4!) 23...bxc6 24.gxh5 ♕d5 25.♖df1. The situation has stabilised and White has three pawns for a piece but his pawn chain lost its fighting efficiency. Or 21.♕g2 hxg4 22.d5 (on 22.♕xg4 ♗f6 23.♗g2 ♕d7 24.♖hf1 ♘e7 Black consolidates his position approximately as in the game) 22...♘b4! 23.♗c4! (after 23.axb4 axb4 24.♗xb4 ♖a1+ 25.♔d2 – or 25.♔c2 ♖xd1 26.♔xd1 ♕d7! – 25...♗xc5! Black goes for a winning counterattack), and now there is a choice between 23...b5!? with the idea 24.♗xb5? ♘a2+ and the capture on c5 or f5. Black's position is preferable in every respect. There is also an incredible option suggested by Sergei Shipov – 21.d5!? ♗g5+ (although, we must note that the resource 21...♘b4! remains valid) 22.hxg5 ♖xe2 23.♖xh5! White plays without a queen but two enemy pieces are attacked and Black must take into consideration such moves as ♗c4, g5-g6 and ♖dh1. There are lots of variations; here is only one of them: 23...♖f2!? 24.dxc6 ♕e7 (to entertain the readers I show the line 24...♕xd1+ 25.♔xd1 ♖xf1+ 26.♔e2 ♖f4 27.cxb7 ♖b8 28.c6 ♖c4 – of course, Black is not obliged to follow the whole line, but his play looks logical because if he succeeds in annihilating White's passed pawns, it won't be difficult to realise an extra rook, however ... 29.♗e5! ♖e4+ 30.♔f3 ♖xe5 31.g6! fxg6 32.fxg6 ♖xh5 33.gxh5 – *finita la comedia!)* 25.cxb7 ♖b8 26.g6 (26.♗d4 ♕xb7! 27.g6 ♕b3 28.gxh7+ ♔h8 29.♗d3 ♖xb2!–+) 26...♕e3+ 27.♗d2 (27.♔b1 ♗xg6! 28.fxg6 ♖xf1!) 27...♕xc5+ 28.♗c3 ♗xg6 29.fxg6 ♕e3+ 30.♗d2 ♕e4. In all these lines the advantage is finally with Black, though the play is full of surprises, and from a practical point of view Shirov would have had better chances here.

21...♗xh4! 22.♗d3

22.d5 is harmless due to 22...♘e5

22...hxg4

Anand displays composure swallowing up the enemy pawns.

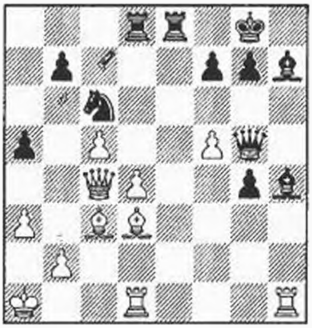
23.♔b1

Shirov plays two quiet king moves in the very heat of the battle and it looks strange. But with other continuations he would have quickly lost the f5-pawn which in turn would have freed the h7-bishop, e.g., 23.♖dg1 ♗g5+ 24.♔b1 ♕f6 25.♖xg4 ♗xf5.

23...♕g5 24.♔a1

24.♗d2 ♕f6 with the further ♗xf5.

24...♖ad8



Black has totally consolidated his position. Meanwhile, Shirov does not succeed in creating real threats.

25.♗b1 ♘e7!

Anand demonstrates a very sound idea again. Having captured the f5-pawn, technically Black wins the equivalent of a piece. At the same time the idea of placing the knight on d5 appears.

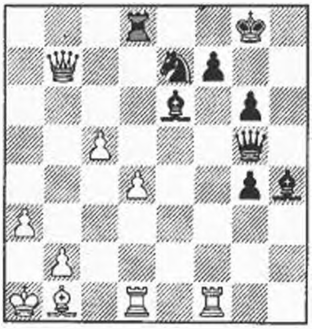
26.♗xa5

Insufficient is 26.d5 ♗xf5 27.♗d2 ♕h5 28.♗xa5 ♖a8 (perhaps also good is 28...♗xb1 29.♗xd8 ♖xd8 30.♔xb1 ♘xd5 31.♖xh4? ♕xh4 32.♖xd5 ♕h1+; 31.♕e4 g6 32.♖d3 ♔g7 and the queen ending in case of the capture on h4 is winning for Black) 29.♗e1 g5 30.♗a2 ♗g6 with ♘f5-e3 to follow.

26...♗xf5!? 27.♗xd8 ♖xd8

Having regained the exchange, Anand has achieved a position in which the black pieces hinder the advance of the white pawns, while his own passed g-pawn is ready to dash forward to promotion.

28.♖hf1 g6 29.♕b3 ♗e6 30.♕xb7



30...♕d5!

A perfect example of the strength of centralisation.

31.♕xd5 ♘xd5

See the note to the 27th move.

32.♖h1 ♗f2 33.c6 ♖c8 34.♖c1 g3 35.♗e4 ♘f6 36.♗g2 ♗d5! 0–1

The last obstacle in the passed pawn's way is eliminated.

71 **B30**

Anand – Grischuk

Round 11 24.01

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 e6 4.♗xc6

White's other popular alternative is the move 4.0–0.

4...bxc6 5.d3

As a result of the exchange operation Black remained with a bishop pair and an extra pawn in the centre. Well, if he plays the natural d7-d5 move in the centre, then the c5-pawn might become weak.

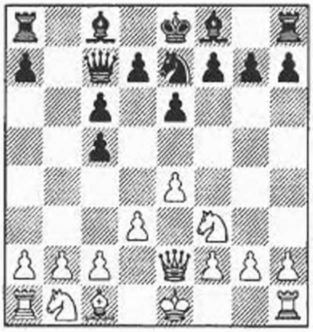
5...♘e7

Black wants to bring his knight to g6.

6.♕e2

White is not in a hurry to castle, because he has the attacking advance h2-h4-h5 up his sleeve.

6...♕c7



7.♘c3

It seems to me that 7.♘h4 promises good prospects for White with the idea to gain additional space after f2-f4. 7...h6 (In case of 7...♘g6 8.♘xg6 hxg6 9.e5!? Black needs to push either the d-pawn or his f-pawn in order to activate his bishops and that would compromise his pawn structure.) 8.g3 (This preparation is necessary because after 8.f4 Black has the excellent resource: 8...g5 and White cannot win a pawn with 9.fxg5 hxg5 10.♗xg5? due to 10...

♕e5!) 8...g6 (8...d5 9.f4 g5 10.fxg5 hxg5 11.♗xg5 ♕e5 12.♗c1± Alekseev – Moiseenko, Kharkov 2003) 9.f4 ♗g7 10.♘f3± Malakhov – Nedev, Rethymnon 2003. White's chances in the centre and on the kingside are preferable to Black's counterplay on the queenside.

7...♘g6 8.♘g5 e5 9.♕h5 d6

But of course not 9...h6? because of 10.♘xf7! ♔xf7 11.♕f5+.

10.0–0 h6 11.♘h3 ♗e7 12.♔h1

Anand intends to go back with this knight. White has somewhat better chances after the more natural move 12.f4, for example: 12...♗xh3 13.♕xh3 ♘xf4 14.♗xf4 exf4 15.♖xf4 ♗g5 16.♖f3 0–0 17.♘e2, Joachim – Fedorov, Rethymnon 2003.

12...♗f6 13.♘g1 ½ – ½

Finally the remarkable manoeuvre ♘g1-f3-g5-h3-g1 has been successfully completed. Of course champions can do anything (or nearly almost...): White wasted 4 moves on that manoeuvre out of the 13 moves played in the whole game. Black is naturally not worse at all.

72 D76

Karpov – Ivanchuk

Round 11 24.01

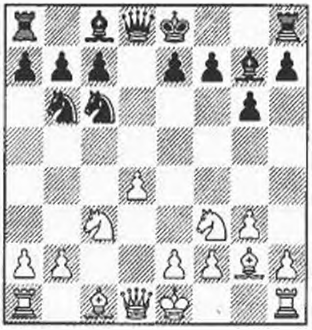
Notes by S. Shipov

There are so many different types of draws as you well know. The adversaries played extremely enterprisingly and skillfully and created a really spectacular and theoretically important game. The draw outcome became a logical consequence of the parity of forces and precise playing.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘f3 ♗g7 4.g3 d5

Vassily Mikhailovich uses all possible openings. I think that the Gruenfeld Defence as a sharp and dynamic system suits his style perfectly, but unfortunately he plays it very seldom. He was in a very fighting spirit that day I guess...

5.cxd5 ♘xd5 6.♗g2 ♘b6! 7.♘c3



7...♘c6

It is important for Black to attack the d4 pawn before White's castling in order to force the move:

8.e3

The point is that after 8.d5 Black takes on c3 with check and wins the d5 pawn.

8...0–0 9.0–0 ♖e8

Black plays a preparatory move before opening the centre.

10.d5

This is no doubt the most principled move. Black plays e7-e5 in the other lines and obtains an excellent counterplay.

10...♘a5

White fails in principle to trap that knight at the edge of the board.

11.♘d4 ♗d7

This is a preparation of the move c7–c6 undermining White's centre.

12.e4

After 12.b4 ♘ac4 13.a4 Black saves his knights with 13...a5.

12...c6 13.♖e1

Two other moves are more popular for White here – 13.b3 and 13.♗f4.

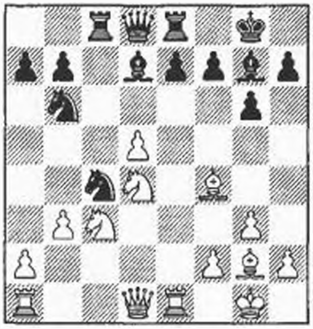
13...cxd5

Black could have postponed that trade a bit with – 13...♖c8.

14.exd5 ♖c8 15.♗f4

White has a clear domination in the centre, but he is slightly behind in development.

15...♘ac4 16.b3



16...♗g4

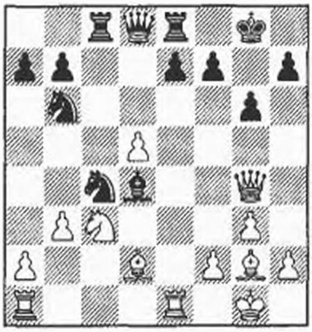
This quite original novelty is rather typical for Ivanchuk's style. One of his pieces is under attack and he puts another one *en pris*! Black had a good position after 16...♘d6 17.♕d2 (17.♖c1 ♘f5 18.♘de2) 17...♘a8 18.♗e5 ♗xe5 19.♖xe5 ♕a5 20.♖e3 ♘c7, in the game Tkachiev – Ye Jiangchuan, Shanghai 2001.

17.♕xg4

Or 17.f3 ♘xd5.

17...♗xd4 18.♗d2!?

Anatoly Evgenievich was evidently in a positive fighting spirit that day. He was encountered with a surprise and avoided solidifying and simplifying as usual. He entered wild complications instead! White could have tried the calm and positional: 18.♖ac1 ♘d6 19.♗d2 (19.♗xd6? ♗xc3!; 19.♕f3 ♘d7!) 19...♗g7 20.h4 ♘d7! – and White would have been slightly better but not more than that.

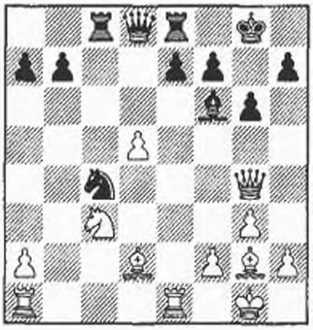


18...♗f6

This move leads to a difficult position for Black. It was a mistake of course to capture on d2, because after 18...♘xd2 19.♕xd4, Black's knight is doomed. The other two lines are quite interesting, though. After 18...♗xf2+ 19.♔xf2 ♘xd2 20.♕d4 Black has the really inventive way to preserve the tension – 20...e6! and later 21.♔g1 (21.♕xd2? ♕f6+ 22.♔g1 ♖xc3; 21.d6!?) 21...♕c7 22.♖e3! (22.♖ac1 ♕c5!) 22...♘dc4 23.bxc4 e5 24.♕h4 ♘xc4 25.♖e2 f5 and Black has some counterplay with two pawns for the piece.

Black had an even stronger resource: 18...e5! 19.bxc4 (after 19.dxe6, the black bishop on d4 is protected – 19...f5 20.♕f4 ♘xd2 and Black wins) 19...♖xc4 20.♕f3 (20.♗g5 ♗xc3!) 20...e4! 21.♘xe4 ♗xa1 22.♗f1 – all this sequence of moves was forced for both sides – 22...♖cxe4 23.♖xe4 ♖xe4 24.♕xe4 ♕xd5 25.♕xd5 ♘xd5 26.♗g2 ♘c3 and the position simplified to a dead drawish endgame with bishops of opposite colour.

19.bxc4 ♘xc4



Ivanchuk's calculations were easily understandable – White could not defend both his pieces on d2 and c3. Suddenly there followed:

20.d6!

This spectacular counterstrike is disrupting the harmony in Black's camp. White had another very attractive move by the way. He had the quite typical for the Gruenfeld Defence exchange sacrifice: 20.♘e4 ♗xa1 21.♖xa1. Karpov evidently did not like it because of 21...f5, but if we continue this line with 22.♕h3! fxe4 (22...♘xd2 23.♘xd2 e5) 23.♕e6+ ♔g7 (the only move) 24.♗c3+ ♔f8 25.♕xe4, White has a very powerful initiative.

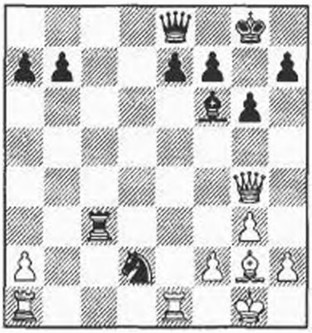
20...♘xd2

It was not good for Black to play 20...exd6? 21.♖xe8+ ♕xe8 22.♖e1+–, or 20...e6?! 21.♖ad1 (21.d7 ♕xd7 22.♘d5 ♗xa1 23.♖xa1) 21...♘xd2 22.♘d5!+–. When I saw that position for the first time I thought that Black could play 20...h5 and force the retreat of the white queen to h3, but the thorough analysis showed that the queen did not need to control the d7 square and White could play instead: 21.♕f4! ♘xd2 22.♘d5! ♗xa1 23.dxe7 ♕a5 24.♖xa1, and Black could just resign despite the extra exchange.

21.d7

This quicksilver pawn rolled all the way up to d7 and its value increased dramatically.

21...♖xc3 22.dxe8♕+ ♕xe8



This was another key moment of that game.

23.♖ac1?!

This loss of a tempo enabled Black to consolidate his position. The hasty 23.♗xb7? did not work because after 23...♖c4! White had to give back the exchange. The correct move was 23.♖ad1!, attacking the knight and capturing the b7–pawn on the next move. There might follow: 23...♘c4 (23...♖d3 24.♗xb7 ♕d8 25.♕e2 ♖d4 26.♖c1!) 24.♗xb7 ♕b8 25.♗d5 ♘d6 26.♖b1 ♕c7 – and of course it would be very difficult for White to win such a position. But at least he could have tried to! The modest a2-pawn might have become the trump card at the end.

23...b5!

This seemingly doomed pawn is now alive and kicking!

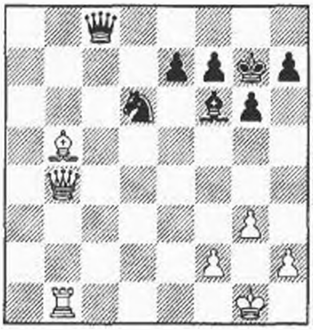
24.♕b4 ♖xc1 25.♖xc1 ♘c4 26.a4 a6 27.axb5 axb5 28.♖b1 ♘d6

Black's pieces now are reliably placed on the dark squares and he has nothing to be afraid of.

29.♗f1

Finally White wins a pawn but that is the last achievement that he can brag about.

29...♔g7 30.♗xb5 ♕c8



Black's position is completely safe now. There are no pawns on the queenside left and the draw becomes a fact of life.

31.♗d3 h5 32.♕e1 ♕c5 33.♖c1 ♕b6 34.♖c2 ♕a7 35.♕e2 ♕b6 36.♕f3 ♕b1+ 37.♔g2 ♕b3 38.♖e2 ♕b4 39.♕e3 ♕b7+ ½ – ½

73 C11

Ju.Polgar – Bareev

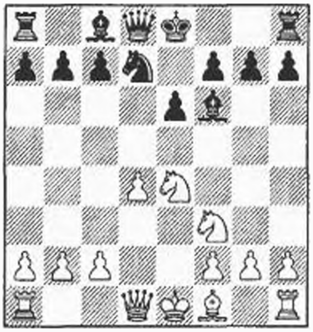
Round 11 24.01

In principle both sides would have been quite happy with a draw in this game. Judit Polgar intended to end the tournament safely with draws which would secure for her at least a place among the top-three, while Bareev was probably relying on his white pieces in the next round. Had he been playing for a win I believe that he would have chosen the Caro-Kann Defence with Black.

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.♗g5 dxe4

The exchange variation of the French defence has the reputation to be very solid and reliable for Black. He should exchange on e4 right on move 4, after White has developed his bishop on g5. Thus Black manages to exchange a couple of pieces in the centre and prepares c7-c5 easily after that.

5.♘xe4 ♗e7 6.♗xf6 ♗xf6 7.♘f3 ♘d7



8.♘xf6+

If White really wants to fight for a win in this variation against such a strong opponent (Bareev and M.Gurevich are the greatest specialists of this line in the world presently), he should castle long and then start a kingside offensive with pawns and pieces. Most of the times White refrains from exchanging his knight on e4 for the black bishop on f6 and so the game remains much sharper, for example after moves like 8.♕d2, 8.♗c4 or 8.♕e2.

8...♘xf6 9.♗b5+

This move is played very often and most of the times with the idea to make an early draw. Just like before, if White wants to fight he should try to castle long after 9.♗d3, or 9.♗c4 followed by ♕e2.

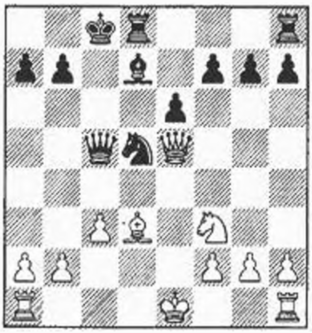
9...♗d7 10.♗d3 c5 11.dxc5 ♕a5+ 12.c3 ♕xc5 13.♕e2

White obviously presented Black with an extra tempo to develop his bishop. The only possible justification for that could be that if Black castles White plays Ne5 and Black must either retreat to e8 with the bishop, blocking his king's rook, or allow its exchange. Bareev's energetic move solves his opening problems successfully outright.

13...♘d5 14.♕e5

This move is both attacking as well as defending against ♘f4 and ♘xc3.

14...0–0–0



15.♗e4

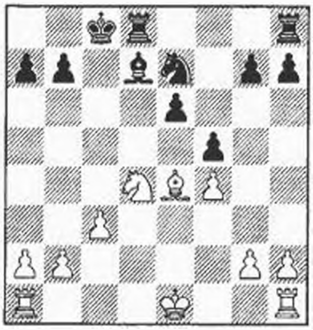
It is too dangerous for White to play 15.♕xg7 ♘f4 – since White's king is so exposed that the least that Black can do is regain his material. The line 15. 0–0 f6 16.♕g3 g5 (with the idea to follow with ♘f4) is also not very good for White. The move in the game is White's only chance to go on fighting for some edge.

15...f6 16.♕d4 ♕xd4 17.♘xd4 ♘e7

This precise move is in fact not so difficult to find. Black intends to play e5 and ♗c6 repelling White's pieces. White's next move is therefore practically forced.

18.f4 f5

Now 18...e5 19.fxe5 fxe5 was not so good for Black, because the e5-pawn would have become isolated.



19.♗c2

White fails to preserve the bishop on the long diagonal – if 19.♗f3 then 19...♘g6 20.g3 e5 21.fxe5 ♘xe5 – and White must comply with the exchange of the bishop for the Black's knight. The bishop on d7 then would be hardly weaker than the white knight.

19...♘g6 20.0–0

If after 20.g3 e5 21.fxe5 ♘xe5 White tries to capture the pawn with – 22.♘xf5 (otherwise after g6 the position would be equal), then Black can follow with 22...♘f3+ 23. ♔e2 ♖hf8 24.g4 (or 24.♔xf3 ♗xf5 25.♗xf5+ ♖xf5+ 26.♔g4 ♖f2, and Black regains the sacrificed material) 24... ♘e5 25.h3 ♗b5+ 26.♔e1 ♗d3, equalizing easily.

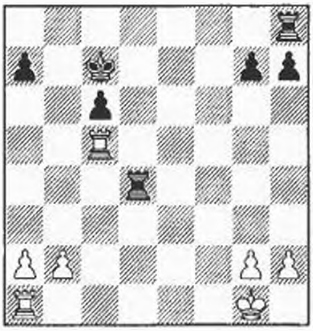
20...♘xf4

Now, the development of the game is more or less forced.

21.♖xf4 e5 22.♖xf5 exd4 23.♖c5+ ♗c6

White would remain with an extra pawn after other moves.

24.♗e4 ♔c7 25.♗xc6 bxc6 26.cxd4 ♖xd4



So the material is equal and although Black's position should be theoretically worse due to the weak pawns a7 and c6 it is practically impossible for White to materialize that minute advantage. Black has very active rooks and there are plenty of open files in the centre. A draw was agreed to after only three moves.

27.♖ac1 ♖d6 28.h4 ♖e8 29.♖1c2 ♖e4 ½ – ½

74 **D47**

Radjabov – Shirov

Round 11 24.01

Notes by D. Yevseev

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.e3 e6 5.♘f3 ♘bd7 6.♗d3 dxc4 7.♗xc4 b5

The opponents are playing the Meran variation of the Slav Defence, which usually leads to a very sharp and complex fight.

8.♗d3 ♗b7 9.e4

Both 8.♗d3 and 9.e4 are some of the most aggressive lines for White.

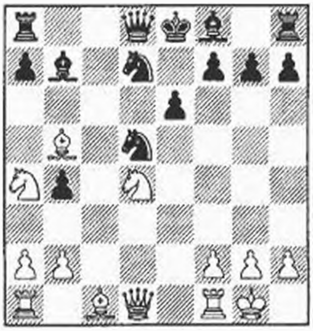
9...b4 10.♘a4 c5 11.e5 ♘d5 12.0–0

White can play 12.dxc5 and 12.♘g5!? is very interesting too.

12...cxd4 13.♘xd4

This line with a pawn sacrifice for White was very popular during the period 1988 – 1991. Later Black found quite reliable ways to neutralize White's initiative and it went out of fashion. It is not often played nowadays either. White can also play 13.♖e1!? without sacrificing anything.

13...♘xe5 14.♗b5+ ♘d7



15.♕h5

This move is rather dangerous for Black although quite rarely played in practice. The line 15.♖e1 is more popular but it has been analysed so extensively that the game usually ends in a draw almost by force!

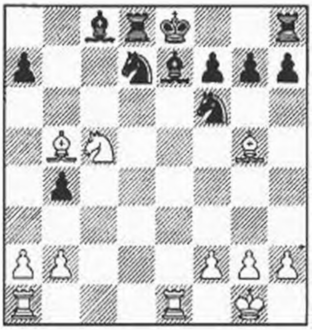
15...♘5f6

Many players with Black were caught napping in the following trap: 15...g6 16.♕e2 a6? (The correct move is 16...♖c8!, defending the key squares c5 and c6.) 17.♘xe6! fxe6 18.♕xe6+ ♗e7 (Black also loses after 18...♘e7 19.♘c5+–, J.Piket – Pelletier, Zurich 2001) 19.♘c5↑ and White has an overwhelming initiative.

16.♘xe6 ♘xh5 17.♘xd8 ♖xd8

Black is only slightly worse after the move in the game. It was interesting for him to try 17...♔xd8!? 18.♖d1 ♗c8 (The other possibility for Black is riskier 18...♘hf6 19.♗g5 ♗c8 20.♗c6 ♖b8 21.♗f4 ♖b7 22.♖ac1↑ and White has the initiative.) 19.♗c6 ♖b8 20.♗e3=∞.

18.♖e1+ ♗e7 19.♘c5 ♗c8 20.♗g5 ♘hf6



The adversaries were repeating the game J.Piket – Shirov,Monaco 2002, until now. Black is forced to part with his extra piece due to the numerous pins.

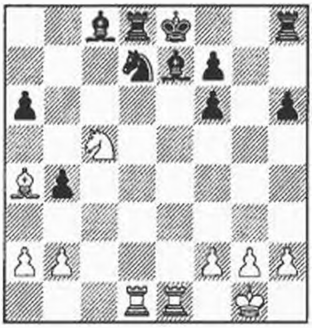
21.♖ad1!

This is a novelty. White played 21.♗xf6 in the game that we have just mentioned. He does not have to be in a hurry with that exchange because Black has no useful moves.

21...a6 22.♗a4 h6

T.Radjabov analyses the line: 22...0–0 23.♘xd7 ♗xd7 24.♗xd7 h6 25.♗h4 ♖xd7 26.♖xd7 ♘xd7 27.♗xe7 ♖b8 28.♔f1±.

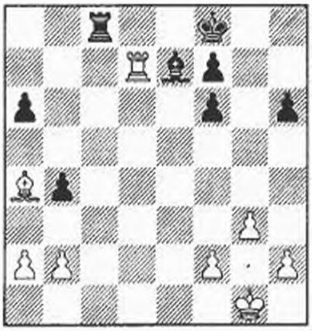
23.♗xf6 gxf6



24.♘xd7

A.Shirov considers 24.g3 to be better and indeed after 24...♖g8 25.♘xd7 (25.h4 b3! 26.axb3 ♖g4) 25...♗xd7 (But not 25...♖xd7? 26.♖d2 ♖g5 27.♖ed1? ♖b5!; 27.♖c1! ♖c5 28.♖xc5 ♗xc5 29.♖c2+–) 26.♖xd7 ♖xd7 27.♖d1 ♖g5 28.♗xd7+ (It is too dangerous for White to play 28.♖xd7?! ♖a5 29.♗c6) 29...♖xa2!. In case of 29.b3? ♖xa4 30.♖xe7+ ♔xe7 31.bxa4 ♔d6 the king and pawn endgame is just lost for White – 32.♔f1 ♔c5 33.♔e2 ♔b6–+) 28...♔f8± and the position is more or less the same as in the game.

24...♗xd7 25.♖xd7 ♖xd7 26.♖d1 0–0 27.♖xd7 ♖c8! 28.g3 ♔f8±



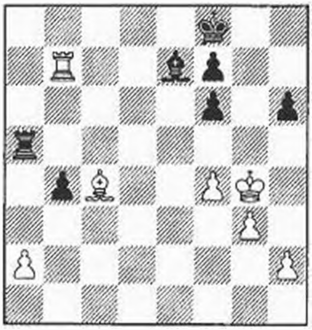
White is only slightly better in this

endgame and after a precise defence by Black, White will hardly be able to claim a full point.

29.♗b3 ♖d8 30.♖a7 ♖d2 31.♖xa6 ♖xb2 32.♖a7 ♖d2 33.♖c7 ♖d3 34.♔g2 ♖d8

Black's defence is easier with rooks present on the board, while after 34...♖c3?! 35.♖xc3 bxc3 36.♔f3 Black might be in trouble..

35.♔f3 ♖a8 36.♔g4 ♖a5 37.f4 ♖b5 38.♖d7 ♖c5 39.♖b7 ♖a5 40.♔h4 ♖f5 41.♖b8+ ♔g7 42.♖e8 ♗f8 43.♖d8 ♗e7 44.♖d7 ♔f8 45.♔g4 ♖c5 46.♖b7 ♖a5 47.♗c4



47...h5+

Black plays that move reluctantly, because that pawn may become weak here, but he was in zugzwang and the rest of the moves were losing material: 47...♖c5? 48.♖xb4; 47...♔e8? 48.♖b8+ ♔d7 49.♗xf7, and the retreat of the rook from the 5th rank, for example 47...♖a8? will be countered with 48.♔h5.

48.♔h4 ♖f5 49.♗b3 ♖a5 50.♖d7 ♖b5 51.♖a7 ♖c5 52.♖a8+

White could have won the h5-pawn with 52.♗d1!?, but after 52...♖d5 53.♗xh5 ♖d3! followed by 54...♖a3 White would have to comply with the exchange of the rooks and the arising endgame with opposite coloured bishops was a draw.

52...♔g7 53.♖e8 ♗d6 54.♖e4 ♖c8 55.♖d4

55.♔xh5 ♖h8+ 56.♔g4 ♖xh2=

55...♖d8 56.♖d5

56.♔xh5 f5 57.g4 (Otherwise the White king may become a victim of a checkmating net after 57...♔f6!) 57...♗e7 (57...♔f6?! 58.g5+ ♔g7 59.♔h4±) 58.♖xd8 ♗xd8=.

56...♗e7 57.♖a5 ♖d2 58.♔h3 ♔g6 59.♖d5 ½ – ½

75 D15

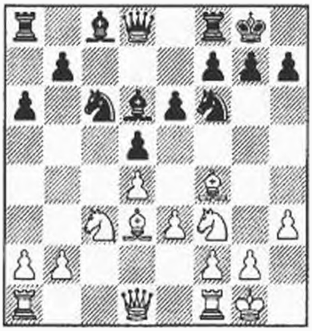
Timman – Ponomariov

Round 11 24.01

1.c4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.♘c3 a6 5.h3

Presently the official theory recommends 5.e3 for White.

5...e6 6.cxd5 cxd5 7.♗f4 ♗d6 8.e3 0–0 9.♗d3 ♘c6 10.0–0



10...b5

Some time later Timman with White had another game which continued: 10...♗xf4 11.exf4 b5 12.♖c1 ♕b6 13.♕d2 ♗d7 14.♕e3 ♘a5 15.♘e5 and he had some initiative, Timman – S.Hansen, Malmoe 2003.

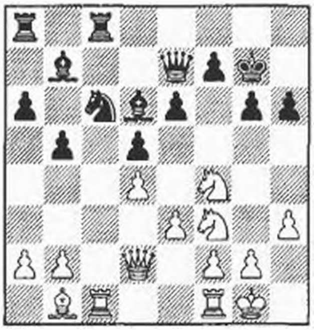
11.♗g5

Timman intends to place his queen's rook on c1, to remove the bishop to b1 and to build a battery ♕+♗ after ♕d3. Nevertheless White's threats against the black king are easily neutralized.

11...h6 12.♗xf6 ♕xf6 13.♖c1 ♗b7 14.♗b1 ♕e7 15.♘e2

Black would have countered the planned 15.♕d3 with 15...f5.

15...♖fc8 16.♘f4 g6 17.♕d2 ♔g7



18.e4?

White was absolutely unprepared to open the position. It was worth considering playing 18.♘d3 with the idea to place the knight later on c5.

18...dxe4 19.♗xe4 ♘b4 20.♗xb7 ♕xb7 21.a3?

This is simply a blunder and White loses the exchange. It was better to play 21.♘d3, and if White wanted so much to repel the knight immediately he should have exchanged the rooks first 21.♖xc8 ♖xc8. He could have played then 22.a3 without losing the exchange, but he would have still serious problems after 22...♖c2.

21...♗xf4 22.♕xf4 ♘d3 0–1

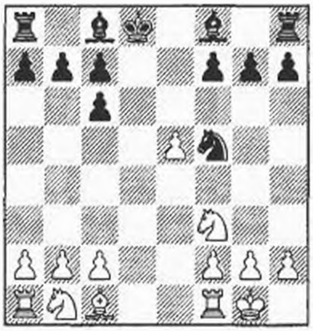
76 C67

Topalov – Krasenkow

Round 11 24.01

Notes by D. Yevseev

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 ♘f6 4. 0–0 ♘xe4 5.d4 ♘d6 6.♗xc6 dxc6 7.dxe5 ♘f5 8.♕xd8+ ♔xd8



So, the Berlin variation of the Ruy Lopez has been played. White has a stable edge due to his superior pawn structure, but Black's position is a tough nut to crack. Remember the recent match Kasparov – Kramnik, London 2000?

9.♘c3 ♔e8 10.h3 ♗e7 11.♗g5 ♗xg5 12.♘xg5 h6 13.♘f3

The idea of White's last move is to deprive the black knight on f5 of the d4 and h4 squares, so that Black cannot connect his rooks early in the game. Black solved the opening problems easily after 13.♘ge4 ♔e7 in the game Anand – Kramnik, Leon 2002.

13...♗e6

Of course not 13...♔e7?? 14.g4+–.

14.♖ad1 ♖d8 15.b3 g5!?

This is creating weaknesses on the one hand indeed, but Black did not have many useful moves anyway. On the other hand he now has the g7-

square for the knight and also prevents for a while the thematic advance of the white f-pawn. As before it was very bad to play 15...♔e7? 16.g4+−. Black continues to have problems connecting his rooks. He could have also tried the moves: 15...♗d5!?, 15...h5!? or 15...♘e7!? with the idea to bring the knight to g6 or d5 and then to play ♔e7.

16.♘e4 ♗d5 17.♘f6+ ♔e7 18.♘d4 ♘xd4 19.♖xd4 ♗e6

It is not good for Black to play 19...♔e6?! because of 20.♖fd1± (with the idea to follow with 21.c4) and if 20...♔xe5?, then 21.♘g4+ ♔e6 22.c4+−.

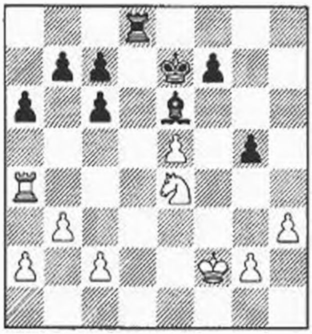
20.♖a4 a6 21.f4 ♖d2 22.♖f2 ♖hd8

White has some edge after 22...♖xf2 23.♔xf2 gxf4 24.♖xf4 ♖d8 25.♔e2±.

23.fxg5 hxg5 24.♘e4 ♖xf2

Black preserves good drawing chances in the four rook endgame after: 24...♖2d5!? 25.♘xg5 ♖xe5 26.♘xe6 ♖xe6±.

25.♔xf2



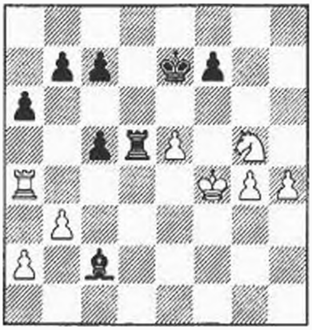
25...♗f5?!

In case of 25...♖d5!? 26.♘xg5 ♖xe5 27.♘xe6 ♖xe6± Black has less chances to make a draw in comparison to the position with four rooks – see the notes to Black's previous move. I do not understand however why Michail Krasenkow did not play the attractive move 25...g4! with an easy draw. Should White try to win then, he must risk a lot, for example: 26.h4?! ♖d5 27.♘f6 ♖c5! (but not 27...♖d2+?! 28.♔g3 ♖xc2 29.h5 and White's passed h-pawn is very dangerous). Now only Black can play for a win in this position: 28.♘xg4 (28.♔g3 ♖c3+! 29.♔f4 ♖xc2; 28.h5 ♖xe5! 29.♖f4 ♖f5) 28...b5! 29.♖f4 ♖xc2+ 30.♔g3 ♖xa2 31.h5 ♗xb3 32.h6 ♗c2 etc.

26.♘xg5 ♖d2+ 27.♔f3 ♗xc2 28.g4 ♖d5

This decision is a bit illogical. Black tried to activate his forces with his move 25 and now he retreats unnecessarily. It is possible that he did not like the planned move 28...♗b1!? because of 29.♖f4 ♖d3+ 30.♔f2 (30.♔e2 ♖d5 31.♖xf7+ ♔e8 32.♖g7 ♖xe5+ 33.♔f3 ♔f8 34.♔f4 ♔xg7 35.♔xe5 ♗xa2=) 30...♖d2+ 31.♔g3 (31.♔e3 ♖d3+!) 31...♖d3+. The idea of this series of checks is to push the white king to the h4-square in order to stop the advance of the h-pawn. 32.♔h4 ♗xa2 33.♖xf7+ ♔e8 34.♖xc7 ♖xb3 35.♘f7!± and White is still better because his passed pawns are dangerous and the black king is cut off along the7th rank.

29.♔f4 c5 30.h4



30...♔f8?

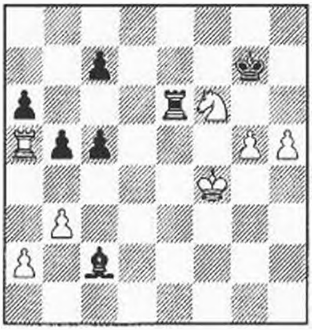
This is a grave mistake and White is clearly better now. Despite the numerous mistakes by Black in the last several moves he still had good drawing chances after the correct: 30...♗d3! 31.h5 c4! 32.bxc4 (32.h6?? c3 33.h7 c2 34.h8♕ c1♕−+) 32...♖d4+ 33.♔f3 (White does not achieve much with 33.♔g3 ♗e2, as well as with 33.♔e3 ♖xg4) 33...f6! 34.exf6+ ♔xf6.

31.h5 ♔g7 32.e6! f6 33.♘e4 ♖e5 34.g5! ♖xe6

Black loses after 34...♖xe4+? 35.♖xe4 fxg5+ 36.♔f5 ♗xe4+ 37.♔xe4+−.

35.♘xf6± b5 36.♖a5

Black succeeded in isolating the white rook away from the action for a while, but this is only a minute consolation for him, since White's passed pawns are very powerful.



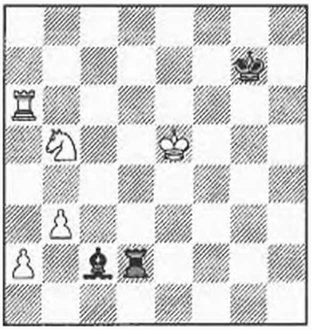
36...♖c6?

This is the decisive mistake. Black could have offered some stubborn resistance with 36...♔f7.

37.h6+ ♔g6 38.♘d7!

White is now threatening 39.♘e5+, as well as 39.♘b8.

38...♖d6 39.♘xc5 ♖d4+ 40.♔e5 ♖d2 41.♖xa6+ ♔xg5 42.♘e6+ ♔xh6 43.♘xc7+ ♔g7 44.♘xb5+−



White has an easily winning position and there is nothing to comment on anymore.

44...♔f7 45.♘d4 ♗d3 46.♖a7+ ♔e8 47.a4 ♔d8 48.b4 ♔c8 49.b5 ♖h2 50.♔d6 ♖h6+ 51.♔c5 ♗e4 52.♖e7 ♗g2 53.a5 ♗b7 54.♘e6 ♔b8 55.a6 ♗c8 56.♘d4 ♗xa6 57.♘c6+ ♔c8 58.♔b6 1–0

77 E32

Van Wely – Kramnik

Round 11 24.01

Notes by M. Notkin

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.♕c2 0–0 5.a3 ♗xc3+ 6.♕xc3 b6 7.♗g5 ♗b7 8.f3 d6

This is a secondary line as compared with 8...h6 9.♗h4 d5; or 8...d5. The text move allows White to take the centre.

9.e4 c5

Bad is the "typical" 9...♘xe4? 10.♗xd8 ♘xc3 11.♗xc7 ♘a4 12.b3 winning a piece.

10.dxc5

10.d5 ♘bd7 (again 10...♘xd5? 11.♗xd8 ♘xc3 12.♗e7 ♖e8 13.♗xd6 doesn't work) 11.♘h3 has also been tested at the highest levels.

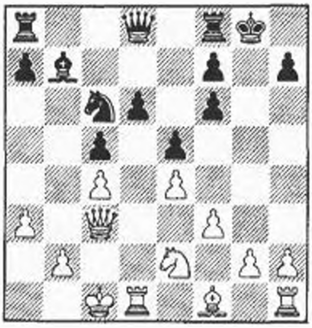
10...bxc5 11.0–0–0

A sharp continuation. 11.♖d1 ♘c6 12.♘h3 ♘d4 13.♘f2 h6 14.♗e3 e5 15.♗d3 a5 was played in Karpov – Andersson, Reggio Emilia 1989/90.

11...♘c6

It was the last moment when Black could take on e4. In the game Prudnikova – Kulish, Rostov 1995, after 11...♘xe4 12.♗xd8 ♘xc3 13.♖xd6 ♘a4 14.♗h4 ♘b6 15.b3 ♖c8 16.♘e2 ♘c6 17.♗f2 White got a better ending with the pair of bishops and possession of the d-file.

12.♗xf6 gxf6 13.♘e2 e5



The black knight comes to d4 and that is compensation for the destroyed pawns on the kingside.

14.♕d2

A new move. Van Wely sends his queen towards the Black's king neighborhood. 14.♘g3 was seen in Rajlich – Yu Mingyuan, Budapest 2000.

14...♘d4 15.♕h6

With idea of ♘g3-h5.

15...♔h8

Black clears a path to g6 for the rook.

16.h4!?

White's direct attacks are over for some time and Kramnik has time to organize his counterplay.

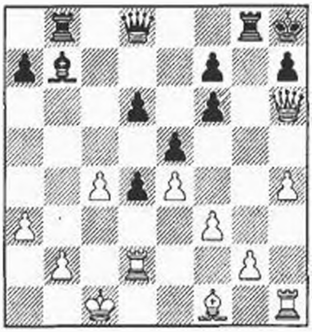
16...♖b8 17.♘xd4 cxd4

Of course not 17...exd4? 18.♗d3 with the idea of e4-e5.

18.♖d2

Protecting the b2-pawn in advance.

18...♖g8



19.h5

Revealing the idea behind White's 16th move. Now Black can't drive the opponent's queen away from h6. Therefore his own queen should watch over the f6-pawn.

19...♗a6 20.♗d3 ♖b6!

Curiously enough at this moment the white queen has no moves. Black is going to attack it along the 6th rank.

21.♖c2

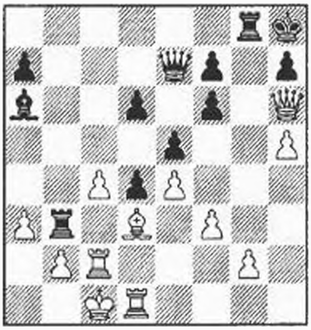
The line 21.g4 f5 22.exf5 (22.gxf5? d5) 22...♗xc4! (22...d5? 23.f6 e4 24.g5! ♕f8 – 24...exd3? 25.g6 mating – 25.♕xf8 ♖xf8 26.♗f1! d3 27.cxd5 e3 28.♖xd3 ♗xd3 29.♗xd3 favours White.) 23.♗c2 (23.♗xc4 d5 loses the queen; 23.f6 fails to 23...♗xd3 24.♖xd3 d5 25.g5 ♕c8+ 26.♔b1 ♕f5) 23...f6 leads to Black's advantage – his attacking chances are better.

21...♖b3

The attempt to lock the queen 21...♖g5 would have been repelled by

22.♖d1 d5 23.c5. After 21...f5 22.exf5 d5 23.f6 e4 24.fxe4 dxc4 25.♗xc4 ♗xc4 26.♖xc4 ♖xg2 it seems that White is in danger but he holds on by giving up the queen for two rooks – 27.♖c2 ♖xf6 28.♕xf6+ ♕xf6 29.♖xg2.

22.♖d1 ♕e7



The position is about equal. The initiative belongs to Black but White has enough resources to defend his king as the opponent's queen is still unable to take part in the queenside actions.

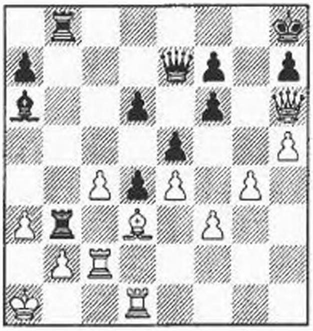
23.♗f1 ♕e6 24.♗d3 ♖c8

Actually, Black isn't threatening to take on c4.

25.♔b1 ♖cb8

25...♗xc4?? 26.♗xc4 ♖xc4 27.♕f8#.

26.♔a1 ♕e7 27.g4



27...♗c8

Kramnik has exhausted the active moves. Now he has to find a sensible rearrangement for his pieces. An important feature is that the white rook on the 2nd rank protects his king quite well which is demonstrated in the variation 27...d5? 28.exd5 ♖xa3+ (alas after 28...♕xa3+ 29.bxa3 ♖xa3+ White plays 30.♖a2) 29.♔b1! and to save his king Black should play 29...♖xd3 30.♖xd3.

28.♖g2!

It appears that White has the extremely dangerous idea of f3-f4 followed by g4-g5 opening the files on the kingside.

28...♗d7

The move 28...♗a6 comes into consideration as well. After 29.♖dd2 (it's early for 29.f4? d5! 30.g5? ♖xb2!–+) the attack 29...d5 (also possible is 29...♖c8 30.g5 fxg5 31.♖xg5 f6) is parried by 30.exd5 ♖xa3+? (but the exchange sacrifice 30...♖xd3 31.♖xd3 ♗xc4 32.♖d1 ♗xd5 gives Black certain compensation) 31.bxa3 ♕xa3+ 32.♖a2 (making the c1 square accessible for the white queen) 32...♕xd3 33.♕xf6+ ♔g8 34.♕g5+ ♔f8 (34...♔h8? 35.♕xe5+ ♔g8 36.♕xb8+) 35.♖gc2! and it's White whose attack is unstoppable e.g. 35...♗xc4 36.♖xa7 ♗xd5 37.h6.

29.♖dd2

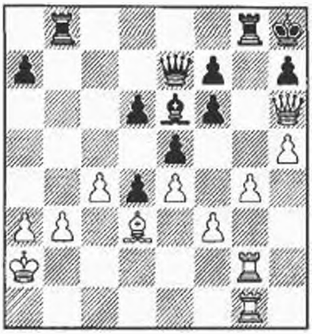
Interesting lines could have arisen in the event of the straightforward 29.f4 ♗c6 (more cautious is 29...♖g8 30.g5 fxg5 31.fxg5 ♖g7) 30.g5 fxg5 (30...♖xd3? loses to 31.♖xd3 ♗xe4 32.gxf6 ♕f8 33.♖b3!) 31.c5! (after 31.fxg5 the exchange sacrifice works fine – 31...♖xd3! 32.♖xd3 ♗xe4 33.♖dg3 ♗xg2 34.♖xg2 ♖g8 and Black is a pawn up) 31...dxc5! (31...♖xd3? 32.♖xd3 ♗xe4 is not a temporary sacrifice – 33.cxd6 ♕f8 34.♕f6+ ♕g7 35.♕xg7+ ♔xg7 36.♖xg5+ and Black bids farewell to the exchange! The ending after 31...f6 32.fxg5 ♕f8! 33.♕xf8+ ♖xf8 34.g6 ♖b7! – 34...♖g8? 35.♗c4 – 35.cxd6 ♖d8 36.♖f1 ♖xd6 37.♖gf2 is better for White.) 32.♕xc6 exf4 and in the ensuing sharp position Black would combine the advance of the kingside passed pawns with an eventual attack on the opposite flank (c5-c4 followed by a blow on a3).

29...♖g8 30.♔a2 ♖b6 31.♖df2 ♗c6?!

This move breaks the important communications in Black's camp. It would have been useful for Black to keep the opposition ♖b6 vs the white queen. 31...♗a4! was correct when 32.f4? is met by 32...d5.

32.♖g1 ♖c6 33.b3 ♖b6 34.♖fg2 ♖bb8

34...♖gb8 35.g5 and White's attack is faster.



35.f4! ♗d7

Strategical capitulation is 35...exf4 36.♕xf4 as Black is left with too many weak pawns.

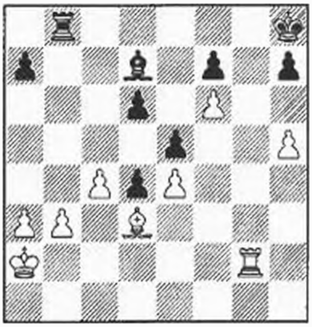
36.g5 fxg5 37.fxg5 ♖g7 38.♕f6!

After 38.g6 ♗c6, with the idea of f7-f5, the position is unclear as White has no direct threats.

38...♕xf6?

This change of the pawn structure is fatal. Correct was 38...♕e6. If White continues 39.h6? ♕xf6 40.gxf6 then 40...♖g6! and the advantage goes to Black.

39.gxf6 ♖xg2+ 40.♖xg2



Playing without the king is hopeless for Black but the rook exchanges lead to a bishop ending where White has a decisive advantage thanks to the pawn majority on the queenside.

40...h6

After 40...♖g8 41.♖xg8+ ♔xg8 Van Wely points out the finesse 42.a4! which allows White to advance the pawn avalanche on the queenside (in case of 42.b4 ♗a4 it would be blocked).

41.b4 ♖g8 42.♖xg8+ ♔xg8 43.b5 ♗g4

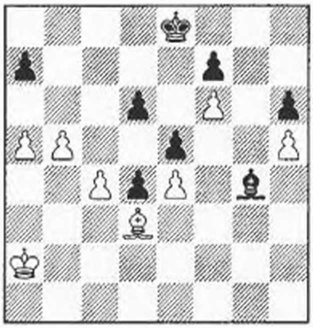
Or 43...♔f8 44.♔b3 ♔e8 45.♔b4 and there's no defence against ♔a5-a6 and the c4-c5 advance.

44.a4 ♔f8

44...♗xh5 loses to 45.a5 ♗g4 46.a6 ♗d7 47.♗e2! ♔h7 48.♗h5 ♔g8 (48...♗e6 49.♔b3 threatening b5-b6) 49.♗g4! ♗e8 (49...♗xg4 50.b6) 50.♗c8! d3

51.♔b3 h5 52.b6 axb6 53.♗b7! promoting the pawn.

45.a5 ♔e8



46.a6! ♔d8

46...♗c8 47.c5! dxc5 48.♗c4. Zugzwang. It's impossible to save the f7-pawn – 48...♔f8 (48...♔d7 49.♗xf7+–) 49.b6! ♗xa6 (49...axb6 50.a7 ♗b7 51.♗d5) 50.bxa7! ♗xc4+ 51.♔a3+–.

47.b6! ♗d7 48.c5! dxc5

48...axb6 49.a7 ♗c6 50.cxb6 followed by ♗a6 wins, e.g. 50...♗b7 (50...♔c8 51.♗a6+; 50...♗a8 51.♗a6) 51.♗a6!.

49.♗c4 1–0

Kramnik resigned (49...axb6 50.♗d5). A great day for Van Wely!

78 **E34**

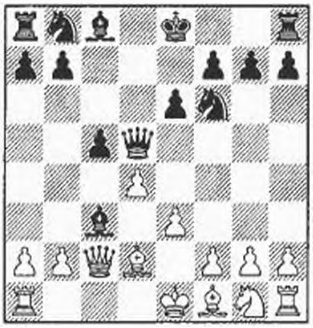
Bareev – Ivanchuk

Round 12 25.01

Notes by S. Shipov

Bareev provided his fans with mixed emotions – he started the tournament quite successfully, then he lost three games and later he recovered and came back to "plus two". He showed a real fighting character!

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.♕c2 d5 5.cxd5 ♕xd5 6.e3 c5 7.♗d2 ♗xc3



8.bxc3!?

This variation is gradually becoming popular mostly due to Bareev's efforts. Almost all top-players take on c3 with the bishop and enjoy playing with a bishop pair at the expense of a much inferior development. Capturing with the pawn looks very sensible too – White's centre is solidified. All this was played back in 1935 between R.Fine and H.Golombek. White won that game easily, though...

8...b6

In the game Bareev – Huzman, Panormo 2001, Black reacted a bit differently – 8...0–0 9.♘f3 b6 10.c4 ♕h5 11.♗e2 ♗b7 12.0–0 ♘bd7 13.♖fd1 ♖fe8 14.♗c3 ♕g6 15.♕xg6 hxg6 16.a4! ♖ac8 17.a5, and White had some positional pressure.

9.♘f3 ♗b7

Vassily's priority number one is to take control over the e4–square.

10.♗e2N

This is a novelty. In the game Kjeldsen – Christensen, Denmark 1996, White played here 10.♘e5 ♘bd7 11.♘xd7 ♕xd7 and it turned out that he had some problems developing his kingside. He had to create additional weaknesses – 12.f3 0–0 13.♗e2 ♖ac8 14.♕b2 ♖fd8 15.♖d1 (15.0–0 cxd4

16.cxd4 e5!) 15...♗c6 16.♗a6 ♖b8 17.♗c4 ♗d5 18.♗b5 ♗c6 19.♗c4 ♗d5 20.♗b5 ♗c6 and the opponents agreed to a draw.

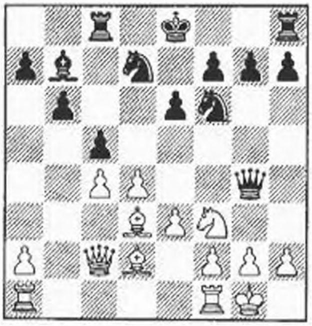
10...♘bd7 11.0–0 ♖c8

Vassily's priority number two is to develop quickly his queenside. The king can remain in the centre for a while...

12.c4

White's main idea in the R.Fine – Bareev variation is to occupy the centre with pawns. He is not afraid to play with a couple of "hanging" pawns.

12...♕e4! 13.♗d3 ♕g4!



The black queen exerts a strong pressure now on White's kingside.

14.d5!?

This is an interesting pawn sacrifice. Evgeny is ready to take chances in order to seize the initiative. The alternative was 14.h3 ♕h5 15.♗e2 followed by a centralization of the rooks and a march forward of the a2–pawn.

14...exd5 15.cxd5 ♗xd5

But not 15...♘xd5?! 16.♗f5!

16.e4

The placement of the black king on e8 precludes further capturing.

16...♗b7 17.h3 ♕h5 18.e5

White is quite consequent in his actions.

18...♘d5

After 18...♗xf3 White has 19.exf6!

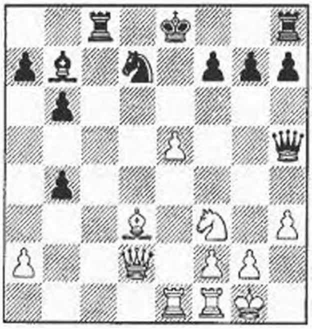
19.♖ae1

White concentrates forces for the attack.

19...♘b4!

Vassily avoids the obvious trap – 19...0–0?! 20.♘g5! and Black is lost irrelevant of the way he defends the h7–square. After 20...h6 White has the elegant tactical strike 21.♗a6!, and in case of 20...g6 White follows with 21.♗e2! ♕h4 22.♗g4 ♗c6 23.g3 ♕h6 24.♘e6!+–

20.♗xb4 cxb4 21.♕d2



21...♗xf3!?

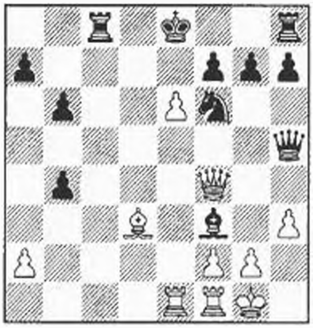
Ivanchuk decided to gamble! He felt that he had serious winning chances and risked a lot. It really seemed very attractive to compromise White's kingside before castling. After the correct 21...0–0 White's tactical tries do not work – 22.♘g5 h6 23.♗h7+ (the strike 23.♘xf7 is not effective due to 23...♗xg2! 24.♔xg2 ♕xf7 and if 25.e6 Black can check on f3) 23...♔h8 24. ♕xd7 ♗xg2 25.♘xf7+ ♔xh7 26.♔xg2 ♕xf7, and Black has a slight edge in the rook and pawn endgame. Therefore probably the best that Evgeny could do was to recapture his pawn with 22.♗e4 ♗xe4 23.♖xe4 ♘c5 24.♖xb4 reaching an approximately equal position.

22.e6! ♘f6

White was threatening to take on d7 with a double discovered check. It might seem paradoxical but Black could have played 22...fxe6 23.♖xe6+ ♔d8 (23...♔f7? 24.♗g6+!) 24.gxf3, and although it might look like the black king was in a real trouble, Black could play 24...♖c5! and the position would have become really wild! White's king was in dire straits too.

23.♕f4!?

This is even increasing the tension! Black could answer 23.♕xb4 with 23...♕c5!



This was a key moment of the game.

23...0–0?!

This is the normal human reaction – avoid risk, evacuate the king from under fire. It looks however that this natural move is imprecise in that position. Black was losing the exchange after 23...♗xg2 24.♔xg2 0–0 25.♖e5 ♕h6 26.♕xh6 gxh6 27.e7 ♖fe8 28.♗b5.

Vassily did not notice a good practical chance – the move 23...♕d5!, which practically leads by force to... an equal endgame! For example – 24.♗a6 (White's capturing on f7 is harmless, because the black king will be happy to occupy that completely safe square) 24...♗xg2 25.♗xc8 (25.♖e5 ♗xf1! 26.♖xd5 ♗xa6!) 25...♗xf1 26.exf7+ ♔f8 (Most probably the capture also leads to a draw: 26...♔xf7 27.♗e6+ ♕xe6 28.♖xe6 ♔xe6 29.♔xf1) 27.♕xb4+ (27.♔xf1 ♕h1+ 28.♔e2 ♕e4+) 27...♕c5 28.♕xc5+ bxc5 29.♔xf1 ♔xf7 30.♗e6+ and White's powerful bishop compensates the pawn deficit. He will probably capture on c5 quite soon. The draw looks inevitable.

Finally I did not find anything dangerous for Black after the "inhuman" move 23...♗d5!?. There arise plenty of wild complex variations. White can try 24.♕d6, 24.♗b5+, 24.♗a6 or 24.♖e5. Black has sufficient defensive resources in all four lines. Most probably White's attack is objectively by far not enough to win and maybe not good enough to even draw! Nevertheless it is much easier to play that position with White over the board...

24.e7!

This pawn becomes a powerful trump!

24...♖fe8 25.♖e5

Black is suddenly having problems with his queen.

25...♘d5

After 25...♕h6 26.♕xf3! Black will never cope with the e7–pawn without material losses. The most stubborn defence is 25...♖xe7 26.♖xh5 (26.♖xe7 ♘d5!) 26...♗xh5 27.♕xb4 and White has a slight but stable advantage. It will be too hard to turn it into a full point, though…

26.♕g3 ♘xe7 27.♖xh5 ♗xh5 28.♖e1!

Black gave up his queen in a worse situation now. He can hardly coordinate his forces.

28…♘d5

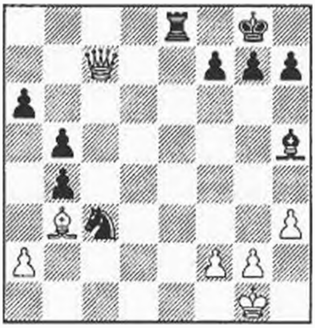
After 28…♗g6 29.♗b5 ♘f5 30.♖xe8+ ♖xe8 31.♕c7, White has excellent chances to annihilate Black's queenside with his queen and later make the modest a2-pawn the dancing queen of the ball.

29.♖xe8+ ♖xe8 30.♗c4 ♘c3 31.♕c7 b5

31…♗g6!?; 31…h6!?

32.♗b3 a6?

Black's attempt to defend his pawns leads to a loss of a piece! It was much more stubborn to play 32…♗g6!, but Black's position was very difficult anyway.



33.f4!

The vulnerability of the f7-square and the weak 8th rank decide the issue immediately.

33…♘e2+ 34.♔h2 1–0

The black bishop on h5 is helpless against the march of the white pawns. This was a superb win by Bareev who joined the leaders with it!

79 **C02**

Grischuk – Radjabov

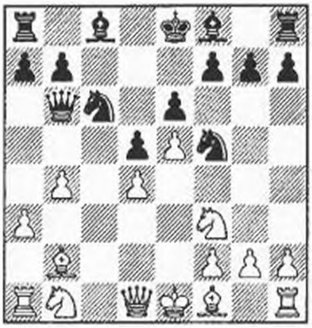
Round 12 25.01

Notes by S. Ivanov

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5

The ancient Nimzowitsch line of the French Defence is becoming fashionable again and Alexander Grischuk is presently one of its main exponents.

3…c5 4.c3 ♕b6 5.♘f3 ♘c6 6.a3 ♘h6 7.b4 cxd4 8.cxd4 ♘f5 9.♗b2



9…♗d7

The move 9…♗e7 is considered to be an important alternative here for Black. Have a look at one of the recent examples: 10.h4 a5!? 11.b5 a4 12.g4 ♘h6 13.♖g1 ♘a5 14.♘c3?! (it was better for White to play 14.♕xa4) 14…♘b3 15.♖a2 ♕a5 16.♗d3 ♗d7 17.♘d2 ♘xd4 18.♘xd5 ♗xb5 19.♗c3 ♕d8 20.♘xe7 ♗xd3 21.♗b4 ♘g8! 22.♘xg8 ♕d5! 23.♖g3 ♕h1+ 0–1 Yemelin – Dolmatov, Krasnojarsk 2003.

10.g4 ♘fe7 11.♘c3 ♘a5!?

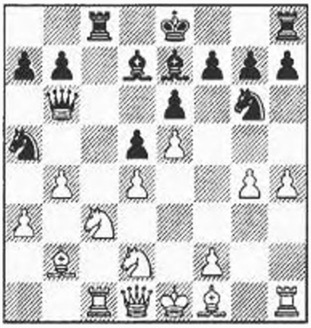
Black will not have any counterplay if he allows White's manoeuvre ♘c3-a4-c5.

12.♘d2 ♖c8 13.♖c1 ♘g6

It was interesting here for Black to try 13…h5!? 14.♖c2 ♘c4 15.♗xc4 dxc4

16.♘ce4 ♘d5 17.♘xc4 ♖xc4!? 18.♖xc4 a5 19.0–0 axb4 20.axb4 ♕d8⇄ Ivanchuk – Bareev, Dubai 2002.

14.h4 ♗e7



15.g5!?

Both opponents were following until now the game Grischuk – Kruppa, Elista 2000, in which Grischuk with White encountered the interesting idea 11...♘a5!? for the first time. White played then 15.h5 ♘f4 16.♕f3 ♗g5 17.♘e2 ♖xc1+ 18.♘xc1 0–0, and obtained a rather dubious position as a result. Grischuk is demonstrating an improvement now.

15....h6

This move seems to be very natural – Black has to fight somehow White's pawn expansion on the kingside, however it enables White to activate his pieces. Black tried the move 15...0–0!? in a later game. It seems rather dangerous at first sight, because Black castles right into danger! It is not easy at all for White to prove the power of the attack with any concrete lines. His king is in the centre and the coordination of his forces is severed considerably because of that.

For example after 16.♕g4 Black has the disruptive bishop sacrifice: 16...♗xb4!? 17.axb4 ♕xb4 18.♖b1 (18.♗a1 ♘xe5⇄) 18...♖xc3 19.♗xc3 ♕xc3 20.h5 ♘e7∞ and the position is totally unclear.

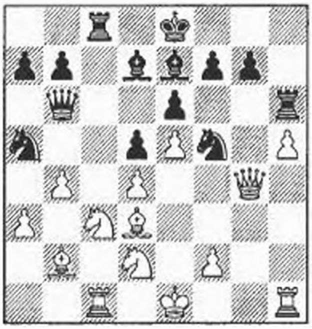
In case of 16.h5 ♘f4 17.h6 Black can play the simple 17...g6, and White's advanced pawns seem to be much rather a weakness than strength. For example: 18.♕f3 ♕xd4 19.♘d1 (19.bxa5 ♗xg5↑) 19...♕xb2! 20.♘xb2 ♖xc1+ 21.♘d1 ♗a4! 22.♗e2 (22.♕xf4 ♗xd1 23.♘e4 ♘b3–+) 22...♘xe2 23.♔xe2 ♘c6∓.

White can also try 16.♖g1, and after 16...♘xh4 17.♗d3 g6 18.♕g4 ♘f5 19.♗xf5 exf5 20.♕h4 Potkin – Hug, Istanbul 2003, White has some initiative but Black's position is very solid. Black has an additional resource 15...♘c4 16.♗xc4 dxc4 17.♘ce4 c3!? 18.♖xc3 ♖xc3 19.♗xc3 ♕a6 and the game is unclear.

16.gxh6 ♖xh6 17.h5 ♘h4

It is too passive for Black to play 17...♘f8 18.♖c2 ♘c4 19.♘xc4 dxc4 20.♗c1 ♖h8 21.♕g4 a5 22.b5 ♖h7 23.♗g2± Thipsay – Barua, Calicut 2003.

18.♕g4 ♘f5 19.♗d3

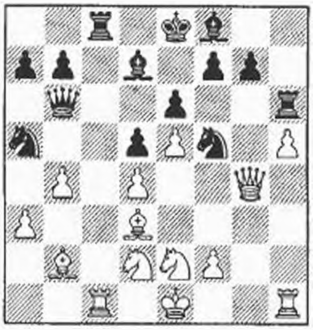


19...♗f8

Black should absolutely not surrender the g7-pawn. For example: 19...♘xd4 20.♕xg7 ♗f8 21.♕g8, and White's passed h-pawn becomes really dangerous.

20.♘e2

White decides to redeploy his forces away from the c–file and the overburdened queenside. He had some other interesting possibilities too: 20.♗xf5 exf5 21.♕f3 ♗e6 22.♘xd5 ♖xc1+ 23.♗xc1 ♕d8 24.♘f4 ♘c6 25.d5 ♘d4 26.♕g2! ♕c7! 27.0–0 ♕xe5 28.♘f3 ♕xf4! 29.♘xd4 (29.♗xf4 ♘e2+ 30.♔h1 ♘xf4→) 29...♕xd4 30.♗xh6 ♗xd5 31.♖e1+ ♔d7 32.♗e3. It is not so easy to evaluate this position correctly, but White's chances seem to be somewhat better; or 20.♗a1 ♘c4 21.♘xd5 exd5 22.♗xf5 ♗xf5 23.♕xf5 ♕e6. Black has a good positional compensation for the pawn.



20...♘c4?!

This manoeuvre is quite standard in positions like that, but it enables White to create a powerful pawn centre. It was probably better for Black to play 20...♘c6 21.♘f3 ♘ce7 22.♖xc8+ ♗xc8 23.♗c1 ♖h8±.

21.♘xc4

But not 21.♗xc4 dxc4 22.♘xc4 ♗xb4+!

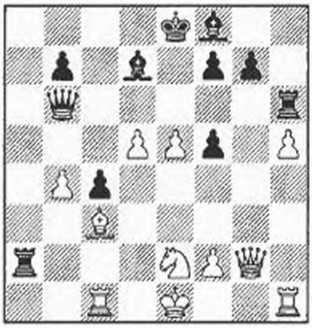
21...dxc4 22.♗xf5! exf5 23.♕g2

White's central pawns are ready to go forward and Black should try to find some counterplay promptly.

23...a5 24.♗c3 axb4 25.axb4 ♖a8

Radjabov is trying to exploit the a–file as a checkpoint of penetration in the enemy camp.

26.d5 ♖a2



27.♔f1!

White is manoeuvring exquisitely. The rook goes to the e–file and after its opening the black king will be in a real trouble. White has the upper hand now.

27...♕a6 28.♖e1 ♔d8 29.♖h3?!

This move is obviously second hand. White had to play instead 29.e6! fxe6 30.♗xg7 ♗xg7 31.♕xg7 e5 (31...exd5 32.♘c3+–) 32.♕xe5 with a clear advantage.

29...f4 30.♖h4 ♕a3 31.e6!

Better late than never! White presented Black with two additional tempi and some counter–chances as well.

31...♖xe2

In case of 31...fxe6 White wins with 32.♖xf4 ♗xb4 33.♕xg7 ♖xh5 34.dxe6 ♗xe6 35.♕f6+ ♔d7 36.♖d4+ ♗d6 37.♘g3+– (analysed by A. Grischuk).

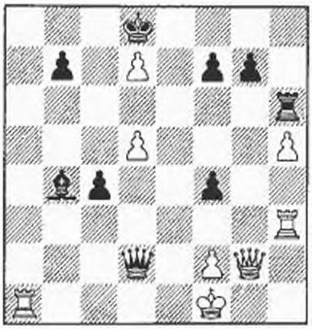
32.♖xe2 ♕xc3 33.♖h3?

White was afraid of ghosts and quite unnecessarily at that. He could have captured the bishop instead – 33.exd7, because in answer to 33...f3 he has 34.♕g5+ f6 (34...♔xd7 35.♕f5+ ♔c7 36.♖e3) 35.♖e8+! ♔xd7 36.♕f5+ ♔xe8 37.♕c8+ ♔e7 38.♖e4+–.

33...♕c1+

It was also OK for Black to play 33...♕xb4 34.exd7 ♕b1+ 35.♖e1 ♕f5, and after 36.♖e8+ ♔xd7 37.♖xf8 ♕b1+ 38.♔e2 ♕b2+! Black has a draw by a perpetual, since 39.♔f3? does not work because of 39...♕a3+ and 40...♕f8.

34.♖e1 ♕d2 35.exd7 ♗xb4 36.♖a1



36...♖a6?

There was a mutual time-trouble during this part of the game and Black makes a mistake in his stead. He did not have to be afraid of the checks on the 8th rank: 36...♕d4! 37.♖a8+ ♔xd7 38.♕g4+ ♔e7 and Black's prospects were not worse at all.

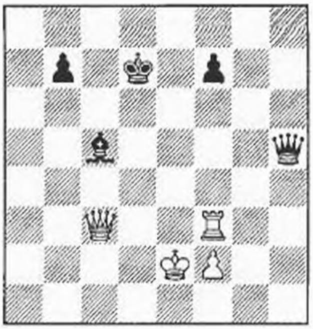
37.♕xg7 ♗c5 38.♖f3?!

White could have just gobbled the f7-pawn on the road: 38.♕g8+ ♔xd7 39.♕xf7+ ♔d8 40.♕g8+ ♔c7 41.♕g7+ ♔b8 42.♖f3 and there arises the same position as in the game but without the f7-pawn.

38...♖xa1+ 39.♕xa1 ♕xd5 40.♕h8+ ♔xd7 41.♖xf4 c3?

This is the last mistake in the time trouble. Black could have simply repeated moves with: 41...♕d1+ 42.♔g2 ♕d5+, because if White avoids the repetition with 43.♖f3?! he would be clearly worse after 43...♗d4 (Black can also draw if he wishes with 43...♕g5+ 44.♔h3 ♕d5) 44.♕f8 c3∓.

42.♕xc3 ♕h1+ 43.♔e2 ♕xh5+ 44.♖f3±



After the exchange of the black c-pawn for the white h-pawn White's winning chances are approximately equal to Black's drawing chances. Both kings are rather exposed and it is not quite clear whether White can win the endgame. I think – probably not.

44...b6 45.♕f6 ♔e8 46.♕c6+ ♔e7 47.♕b7+ ♔e8 48.♕e4+ ♔f8 49.♔d3!

White starts penetrating the enemy position with his king now. His dream set-up would look something like: ♔b7, ♖f5, ♕d5.

49...♗d6

This is Black's correct reaction to the invasion of the king. He intends to welcome it with a series of checks!

50.♔c2 ♕c5+ 51.♔d1 ♕h5 52.♕d3 ♔e7 53.♕e2+ ♔f8 54.♕d3 ♔e7 55.♕e4+ ♔f8 56.♕c6 ♗c5

Black's best move was 56...♔g7, preserving the possibility to manoeuvre with the queen along the 5th rank.

57.♔c2 ♕h7+ 58.♔d2 ♕h5 59.♕a8+ ♔e7 60.♕b7+ ♔f8 61.♕c8+ ♔e7 62.♕c7+ ♔e8 63.♕c6+ ♔f8 64.♕a8+ ♔e7 65.♖f4 ♕g6 66.♖e4+ ♔d7 67.♕b7+ ♔d6 68.♖f4 ♔c6 69.♕c6+ ♔e5

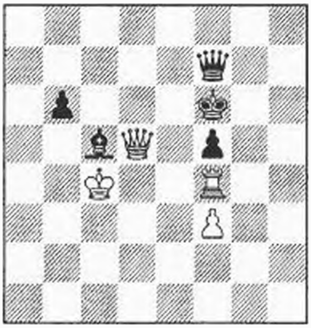
The black king must go forward now, because the other possibility is very bad for Black: 69...♔e7? 70.♖e4+ ♔f8 71.♕c8+ ♔g7 72.♖g4, and Black loses his queen.

70.♕c7+ ♔e6 71.f3

White is improving his position gradually.

71...f5 72.♕c6+ ♔f7 73.♕d5+ ♔f6 74.♔d3 ♕g5 75.♕e4 ♕g6 76.♔c4 ♕f7+ 77.♕d5

77.♔c3 was better.



77...♕xd5+?

Black misses here an excellent chance. He could have drawn immediately with 77...b5+! 78.♔xc5 ♕a7+! 79.♔xb5 (79.♔c6 ♕a8+ 80.♔d6 ♕b8+; 79.♔b4 ♕a4+) 79...♕b8+ 80.♔c5 ♕xf4=.

78.♔xd5

Black exchanged queens in a rather unfavourable situation. His f-pawn had to be advanced and his king was isolated. The game is however far from over yet.

78...♗e3 79.♖c4 f4 80.♖c6+ ♔f5

Black had to attack the f3-pawn immediately: 80...♔g5 81.♔e4 ♔h4 82.♖g6 ♔h3 83.♖g4 ♗d2, and it was not easy to anticipate how White could improve his position.

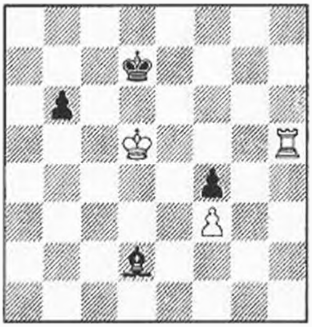
81.♖c8 ♔f6 82.♖f8+ ♔e7?!

The black king does not belong there. 82...♔g5 was the correct move.

83.♖f5 ♗d2 84.♖e5+ ♔d7?

This was the last and decisive mistake. 84...♔f7 was the only playable move.

85.♖h5+−



The black king is repelled now to the 8th rank and White's win becomes a matter of time only.

85...♗e3

Or 85...♔e7 86.♖h7+ ♔f6 87.♖h6+ ♔f5 88.♖xb6+−.

86.♖h7+ ♔d8 87.♔e6 ♗c5 88.♖d7+ ♔c8

88...♔e8 89.♖a7 ♔d8 90.♖a4 ♗e3 91.♖c4+−

89.♖f7 ♗e3 90.♔d6 ♔b8 91.♔c6 b5

Black will soon be in a zugzwang and so he is losing one of his pawns. He would not have survived either after: 91...♔a8 92.♖e7 ♔b8 93.♖e8+ ♔a7 94.♖e4 ♔b8 (94...♔a8 95.♔c7)

95.♖a4+–.

92.♔xb5

Now Black has only a single pawn left and White wins going into a king and pawn endgame at an appropriate moment.

92...♔c8 93.♔c6 ♔d8 94.♔d6 ♔e8 95.♔e6 ♗d2 96.♖c7 ♔f8 97.♔f6 ♔e8 98.♖e7+ ♔d8

98...♔f8 99.♖d7 ♗a5 (99...♗c3+ 100.♔f5 ♔e8 101.♖d3+–) 100.♔e6 ♔g8 101.♖d4 ♗c7 102.♖c4+–.

99.♖e4 1–0

White plays ♔f5, captures on f4 and wins the opposition! This was a really titanic battle between two great young talents!

80 **B46**

Kramnik – Timman

Round 12 25.01

Notes by S. Ivanov

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘c6 5.♘c3 a6 6.♘xc6 bxc6 7.♗d3 ♕c7

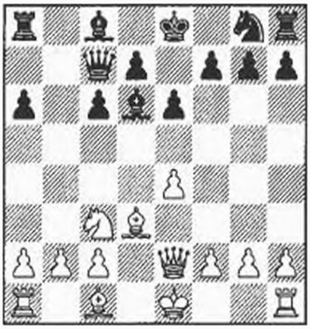
Black is evidently trying to avoid the main lines of this opening variation. The most popular move here is 7...d5.

8.♕e2!?

Kramnik is attempting to prevent d7-d5 with this clever move. Timman had played a game before in this line and it continued 8.0–0 ♘f6 9.f4 d5 10.♔h1 ♗e7 11.e5 ♘d7 12.♘a4 c5 13.c4 d4 14.♗e4 ♗b7 15.♕f3 ♗xe4 16.♕xe4 ♖c8 17.b3 ♕c6 18.♕e2 0–0, and Black solved the problems in the opening quite successfully, Adams – Timman, Dortmund 1999.

8...♗d6?!

Black's reaction is far from the best. In case of 8...e5 9.0–0 d6 10.f4 White again seizes the initiative. Timman managed to find the best way to play this position with Black in a later game: 8...♗b7 9.0–0 d5 10.♘a4 ♘f6 11.c4 dxe4 12.♗xe4 ♘xe4 13.♕xe4 c5 14.♗f4 ♕c8 15.♕c2 ♕c6 16.f3 ♗e7 17.♖ad1 0–0 18.b3 ♖fd8= Hector – Timman, Malmoe 2003.



9.♕g4!

White suddenly changes the direction of his attack. It is not so easy for Black now to defend his g7-pawn.

9...♘e7

Black was reluctant to weaken his kingside and decided to sacrifice his g7-pawn. This idea is quite familiar from the French Defence, but there Black gets excellent counterplay on the queenside. In the current position Black's counterchances are almost nowhere to be seen. It was not any better to play 9...g6 10.f4↑ and Black's pawn structure seems to be very vulnerable. Black probably had to comply with the somewhat inferior position after 9...♗e5 10.f4 ♘h6 11.♕g3 ♗xc3+ 12.bxc3 0–0⩲.

10.♕xg7 ♖g8

White can meet 10...♗e5 with the

powerful 11.♗f4!±.

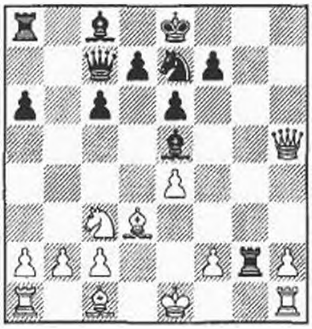
11.♕xh7 ♗e5

Or 11...♖xg2 12.h4!? ♗e5 13.♗g5±.

12.♕h5

White does not need to protect the pawn with 12.♕h3 c5 because Black gets some counterplay. White's queen is very comfortable on the h5-square.

12...♖xg2



13.♘e2!

This powerful manoeuvre is aimed at repelling the black bishop from the long diagonal.

13...d5

Black is incapable to stop f2-f4, for example: 13...♘g6? 14.♕h3, and he is bound to lose plenty of material – 14...♖xh2 15.♖xh2 ♗xh2 16.f4 ♗xf4 17.♘xf4 ♘xf4 18.♕h8+ ♔e7 19.♕h4+–.

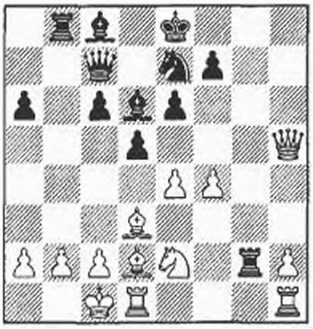
14.f4 ♗d6

Black fails to preserve his bishop on the long diagonal: 14...♗g7? 15.♕f3 ♖g6 16.exd5 exd5 17.♗xg6+–.

15.♗d2

White could have played here 15.♗e3!? He had to try to exchange the dark-squared bishops, because Black's game would become positionally hopeless immediately after that, for example: 15...♖b8 16.e5 ♗b4+ 17.c3 ♗a5 18.b4! ♗b6 19.♗xb6 ♕xb6 20.♕f3 ♖g8 21.♕f2+– (all these lines have been analysed by Kramnik).

15...♖b8 16.0–0–0±



White now has an extra pawn and a better position. He needs only to be careful to parry the temporary activity of the black pieces.

16...c5

In case of 16...♕b6 17.b3 (but not 17.♗c3 dxe4) 17...c5 18.c4± Black does not achieve anything. It was possibly worth bringing into play the light-squared bishop with 16...e5.

17.e5 ♕b6 18.♗c3!

This is the most precise for White. The line 18.b3 c4 19.exd6 cxd3 20.cxd3 ♕xd6⇄ is rather unclear.

18...d4

Now White would meet 18...c4 with 19.exd6 cxd3 20.♖xd3 when Black should resign. The retreat of the bishop leads to a victorious attack for White: 18...♗c7 19.♖hg1 ♖xg1 (19...d4 20.♖xg2 dxc3 21.♕h8+ ♔d7 22.♗b5#) 20.♖xg1 d4 21.♖g7 ♗d8 22.♕xf7+ ♔d7 23.f5! (White can also play 23.♗d2 ♕xb2+ 24.♔d1±) 23...dxc3 24.♘xc3 ♕xb2+ 25.♔d2 exf5 26.♕xf5+ ♔c7 27.♕f6+–.

19.exd6 dxc3 20.♕h8+

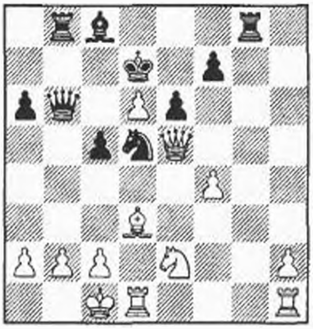
White wins after the simple 20.b3+– too.

20...♖g8

After 20...♔d7 White's most reliable line is 21.b3 (the spectacular move 21.♗b5+ leads only to quite unnecessary complications: 21...♘c6 22.♗xc6+ ♔xc6 23.♕xc3 ♖xe2 24.♕f3+ ♔d7 25.♕xe2 ♕xb2+ 26.♔d2 ♖b4 27.♕e5 ♖d4+ 28.♔e3 ♕xc2⇄) 21...♕b4 (21...♘d5 22.♘xc3) 22.♘xc3 ♕xf4+ 23.♔b1+–.

21.♕xc3 ♘d5 22.♕e5 ♔d7

In case of 22...f6, White's queen retreats with tempo: 23.♕h5+ ♔d8 24.b3.



23.f5+–

This leads to a decisive opening of the f-file.

23...♗b7 24.fxe6+ fxe6 25.♖hf1

This move seems to be the most consistent, but we presume that 25.♗e4 was the best. Then if Black captures the d6-pawn White reaches an endgame with two extra pawns: 25...♕xd6 26.♕xd6+ ♔xd6 27.c4 ♔e5 28.cxd5 ♔xe4 29.♘c3+ ♔f5 30.♖hf1+ ♔g6 31.dxe6+–.

25...♕xd6 26.♖f7+ ♔c6 27.♕xd6+ ♔xd6 28.♗h7 ♖g2?

This is just a blunder and Black loses his knight after it. He could have played instead 28...♖g4 29.♘f4 c4 and put up some stubborn resistance.

29.♘f4 ♖xh2 30.c4 1–0

81 E08

Krasenkow – Van Wely

Round 12 25.01

1.♘f3 d5 2.d4 ♘f6 3.c4 e6 4.g3 ♗b4+ 5.♗d2 ♗e7 6.♗g2 0–0 7.0–0 c6

In case of 7...dxc4?! White is better after 8.♕c2± b5 9.a4 and now it is not good for Black to play 9...c6?! 10.axb5 cxb5 because of 11.♘g5!.

8.♕c2 ♘bd7 9.♗f4 b6 10.cxd5 ½ – ½

Of course after 10...cd there is plenty of intrigue left, but...

82 B19

Ju.Polgar – Anand

Round 12 25.01

Notes by S. Shipov

This was a jolly good game indeed! Judit gets all the credit for taking it bravely to Anand, although great chess gladiators like Shirov and Topalov tried to do that but failed in the same tournament. Fire and ice neutralized each other in that game. It was a draw at the end and that was more or less acceptable for both sides if you had in mind the sportive situation.

1.e4 c6

The fireproof Caro-Kann defence is ideally suitable against players with a tactical style of playing.

2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 dxe4 4.♘xe4 ♗f5 5.♘g3 ♗g6 6.h4 h6 7.♘f3 ♘d7 8.h5 ♗h7 9.♗d3 ♗xd3 10.♕xd3 ♘gf6 11.♗f4 e6

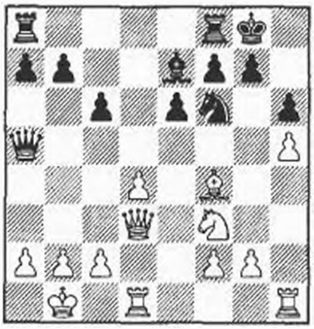
Black has played before here numerous times 11...♕a5+ to be able after 12.♗d2 ♕c7 to castle long. In case of

12.c3, White has problems with his castling because the a2-pawn is not well protected.

12.0–0–0 ♗e7 13.♔b1 0–0 14.♘e4 ♕a5

Black usually exchanges here – 14...♘xe4 15.♕xe4 ♘f6 and after the retreat of the white queen takes his own queen to the e4-square. It was played like that in the third round game between Kramnik and Bareev and also in the rapid chess game between Shirov and Kramnik, Moscow 2002.

15.♘xf6+ ♘xf6



16.g4!?N

This fighting novelty suits Polgar's style completely! White sacrifices a pawn in order to open an important file. White used to begin his attack with 16.♘e5 before, but Black has plenty of time to organize his defence, for example: 16...♖ad8 17.♕g3 ♔h8 (17...♘e4!?) 18.c4 (18.♕f3 ♕d5!) 18...♘d7 (18...♕a6!? 19.♖d3 b5) 19.♖d3 ♕a6 20.♖c1 ♘xe5 (20...♘f6 21.♕f3) 21.♗xe5 ♖g8 22.♕f3 ♖gf8 23.♕g4 ♖g8 24.♖g3 f6 25.♕xe6 fxe5 26.♕xe7 ♖xd4 27.♖a3 ♕b6 28.♖b3 and... White had the advantage despite my last statement Leitao – David, Bled 2002. You can see however from the comments that Black's play can be easily improved.

16...♘xg4!

Black must accept the sacrifice since he will not be able to create an attack of his own. The best policy is to take the pawn and try to consolidate!

17.♖dg1 ♕f5!

Vishy is brave and quite principled but up to a certain extent! Had he been too greedy – that would have led to an overwhelming attack for White, for example: 17...♘xf2 18.♕f1 (the other possibility for White is not so clear 18.♕e2 ♘xh1 19.♗xh6 ♔h7 20.♗xg7 ♖g8 21.h6 ♕h5!) 18...♘xh1 (18...♕f5 19.♗xh6 ♘xh1 20.♗xg7+–) 19.♗xh6 ♔h7! 20.♗xg7 ♖g8 21.♘e5! (21.h6!?) 21...♘g3! – this petite tactical trick weakens White's first rank – (21...f6? 22.♕g2+–) 22.♖xg3 f6 23.a3! ♖ad8 (it is not good for Black to play 23...♖xg7 24.♕d3+ f5 25.♖xg7+ ♔xg7 26.♕g3+ ♔f8 27.♕g6+–; or 23...fxe5 24.b4! ♗xb4) 24.♕d3+ f5 25.♕e3! ♖xg7 26.♖xg7+ ♔xg7 27.♕g3+ ♔f8 28.♕g6 and Black will have to give up his queen on e5 and he will not survive for long after that.

18.♕d2!

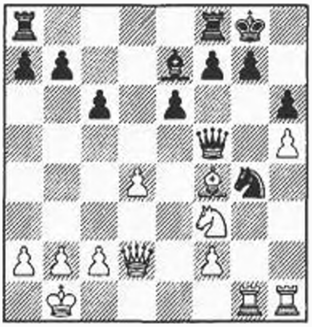
The straightforward line 18.♖xg4 ♕xg4 19.♗xh6 gxh6 20.♖g1 ♕xg1+ 21.♘xg1 was only leading to simplifications and Black's position seemed to be okay.

(diagram)

Now you will need some doping to be able to guess Black's next move...

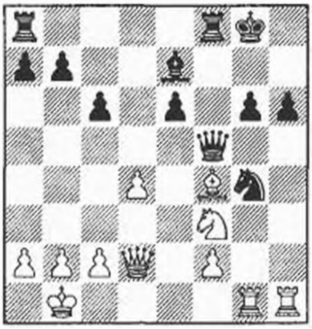
18...g5!?

This is fantastic ingenuity in a difficult situation! You need to have nerves of steel to be able to play a move



like that – with a pawn in front of your own king right on the operational field of action of all white pieces. This man belongs to a caste of warriors... The prophylactic move 18...♔h7 had serious drawbacks – 19.♘h4! ♗xh4 20.♖xh4 ♘f6 21.♗e5 and Black's position could hardly be defended, and after 18...♖ad8 White could have simply started doubling his rooks with – 19.♖g3 and it was not easy to see how Black could have defended.

19.hxg6 fxg6



White's light pieces are suddenly under threat. White now must sacrifice material in order to continue with the attack.

20.♗xh6

After 20.♕e2 Black can defend successfully with 20...h5! (but not 20...♕xf4 21.♕xe6+ ♔g7 22.♖xg4 ♕f6 23.♕e4 followed by ♘f3-e5) 21.♘e5 ♘xe5 22.♗xe5 ♔h7 etc. Meanwhile one needs much more than "etc." in order to reach a definite evaluation of that position.

20...♕xf3 21.♗xf8

It was very interesting for White to play the seemingly polite move 21.♕e1 and then for example: 21...♖f6 22.♗g5 ♖f7 (it is too dangerous for Black to try 22...♔g7 23.♖g3 ♕f5 24.♖gh3 ♖g8 25.♖h7+ ♔f8 26.♖xe7! and the white queen joins the attack via the b4-square) 23.♕xe6 (23.♗xe7 ♖xe7 24.♖h4 ♕xf2!) 23...♕f5 24.♕xf5 gxf5 25.♗xe7 ♖xe7 26.f3 – and Black has good chances to survive in the rook and pawn endgame.

21...♖xf8 22.d5!?

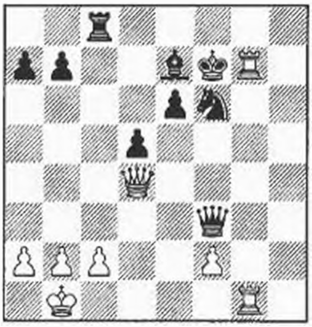
This is an enterprising pawn-sacrifice with the idea to vacate a square for the queen. Once again it deserved attention to play 22.♕e1 – and Black's defence hangs on a thread – 22...♖f6 23.♖g3 ♕f4! (23...♕xf2 24.♖xg4 ♕xe1+ 25.♖xe1±) 24.♖gh3 ♔f7 and now White has a multiple choice. The line 25.f3 ♘e3 25.♖h4 ♕xf3 26.♖4h3 is not promising much because of 26...♘xc2!. It is not easy at all to calculate correctly to the end lines like 25.♖h7+ ♔e8 26.♖xe7+ ♔xe7 27.♕b4+ ♔f7 28.♕xb7+ ♔g8. White has a good compensation for the knight, but there is no direct win in sight. You also need to calculate with White on move 25 lines starting with ♖h8 as well as ♕a5... It is an ocean of variations out there and their evaluation is so difficult...

22...cxd5 23.♕d4 ♘f6 24.♖xg6+ ♔f7 25.♖hg1 ♖c8

This all seemed quite logical and

forced too...

26.♖g7+



26...♔f8

The hunted is not in a hurry to run away from the hunter. The white rook on g7 is under attack and the rook on g1 is tied up with its defence.

27.♕h4

Now it is the right time to run!

27...♔e8 28.♕a4+

White can only lose the game after 28.♕h8+ ♗f8 29.♖xb7 ♕xf2.

28...♔f8

Black could have tried to play for a win here with 28...♔d8 relying on the following trap – 29.♕a5+ ♖c7 30.♖xe7? b6!–+ Naturally Judit would have hardly fallen for that obvious cheapo and she would have probably taken on a7 with a quite unclear position.

29.♕h4 ♔e8 30.♕a4+ ♔f8 ½ – ½

The energy and power of the fighters are not endless. The repetition of moves here seems to be quite well justified for both sides. The really interesting point is – at which particular moment the analyses of the adversaries in that game finished? The whole variation is rather complex, but everything is possible...

83 C42

Ponomariov – Karpov

Round 12 25.01

Notes by S. Ivanov

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘f6 3.♘xe5 d6 4.♘f3 ♘xe4 5.d4 d5 6.♗d3 ♗e7

The Petroff Defence became extremely popular at the top-level tournaments recently mostly due to its reliability. Black chooses also rather frequently 6...♗d6.

7.0–0 ♘c6 8.c4 ♘f6

Black plays more often here 8...♘b4 9.♗e2 0–0.

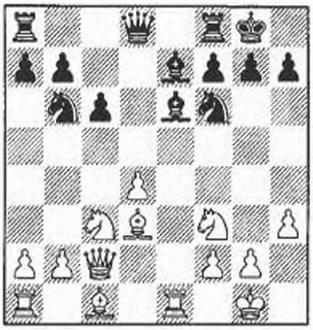
9.h3 ♘b4 10.♗e2 dxc4 11.♗xc4 0–0 12.♘c3 c6 13.♖e1 ♘bd5

This is a quite typical middlegame position with an isolated pawn.

14.♕b3

White is preventing the development of the light-squared bishop of his opponent. In case of 14...♗g5 ♗e6 15.♕b3, Black can counter with 15...♕b6.

14...♘b6 15.♗d3 ♗e6 16.♕c2



16...♗d5

The opponents were repeating the game Topalov – Anand from round one in which after 16...h6 White made an interesting sacrifice of the exchange – 17.♖xe6!? and Karpov prevents this radically. Nevertheless his move is changing neither the character of the fight nor the evaluation of the position as more perspective for White.

17.♘e5 h6 18.♗f4 ♖e8 19.♖e2 ♗e6

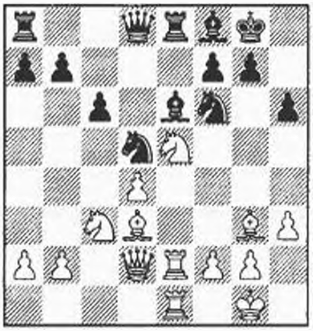
Despite all, this bishop does not belong on d5 and now after the threat of the sacrifice on e6 is over, Karpov retreats with his bishop to free the d5-square for its regular occupant – the knight.

20.♕d2 ♗f8

Karpov plays very precisely and avoids whatever possible sacrifices. After the attractive 20...♘bd5 White could have played 21.♘xd5 (21.♗xh6?! gxh6 22.♕xh6 ♗f8∓; 21.♗g3 ♘h5; 21.♗h2 ♗f8) 21...♘xd5 22.♗xh6!? (22.♗g3 ♗g5!? 23.f4 ♗h4) 22...gxh6 23.♕xh6 ♗g5 24.♕h7+ ♔f8 25.♗f5!, and after the only move 25...♘f6 (25...♕f6 26.♗xe6 ♕xe6 27.♘d7+–) 26.♕h8+ ♔e7 27.♕g7 ♖g8 28.♘xc6+ ♔d6 29.♘xd8 ♖xg7 30.♘xe6 fxe6 31.♖xe6+ ♔d5 32.f4 ♗h4 33.♖e5+ ♔d6 34.g4± White obtains a clear edge in the endgame.

21.♖ae1 ♘bd5 22.♗g3

White centralized all his pieces purposefully and is ready to start hostilities.



22...♖c8?!

This is too abstract. Black should have prevented the pin of the knight on f6. It was better to play 22...♘h5, although after 23.♗b1!? (23.♗h2 ♕g5) 23...♘xg3 24.fxg3 ♘f6 25.♕d3 White still has the initiative.

23.♗h4 g5

This leads to an abrupt change of the character of the position and absolutely contradicts Black's previous play. He could have simply avoided the pin with, for example, 23...♕b6, retaining a quite solid game.

24.♗g3 ♘h5

This move is trying to force some exchanges, but now the black king is rather weakened.

25.♘xd5 ♘xg3 26.fxg3 cxd5

It was a mistake to play 26...♕xd5? 27.♗c4 ♕d6 28.♘xf7! ♗xf7 29.♗xf7+ ♔xf7 30.♖xe8 ♖xe8 31.♕f2+–. In case of 26...♗xd5 27.♗b1 ♗g7 28.♕d3↑, White's threats were rather unpleasant.

27.♗b1

White now builds a dangerous battery along the b1-h7 diagonal and organizes a powerful attack exploiting the f-file.

27...♕f6 28.♘g4!

Black will counter the straightforward 28.♕d3 with 28...♕g7.

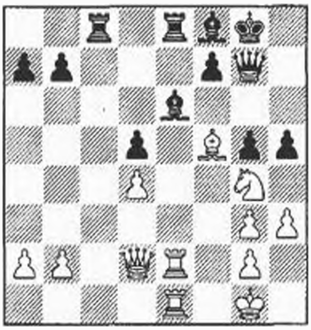
28...♕g7 29.♗f5!?

Ponomariov increases the pressure.

29...h5?

This is a tactical blunder. There was nothing really dangerous for Black after 29...♖c4!?. After the forced line 30.♗xe6 ♖xe6 31.♖xe6 fxe6 32.♖xe6 (32.♖d1? ♖xd4! 33.♕xd4 ♕xd4+ 34.♖xd4 ♗c5–+; 32.♘e5 ♗b4) 32...♕xd4+ 33.♕xd4 ♖xd4 34.♘xh6+ ♗xh6 35.

♖xh6 ♖d2, he had some counterplay in a pawnless rook endgame.



30.♖xe6!

Karpov was evidently counting only on 30.♗xe6 ♖xe6 31.♖xe6 fxe6 32.♕e3 ♖e8.

30...♖xe6

Black is losing in case of 30...fxe6 31.♖xe6 hxg4 32.♖g6 ♖c7 33.♖xg7+ ♖xg7 34.♕a5+– and after the fall of the d5-pawn Black's position is hopeless.

31.♖xe6 hxg4

Or 31...fxe6 32.♗xe6+ ♔h8 33.♗xc8 hxg4 34.♗xg4+–.

32.♖e5 ♖c7 33.♗xg4 ♗e7 34.♖xd5+–

As a result Black remained with terribly weakened light squares and two pawns down. White's position is technically winning.

34...♕g6 35.♔h2 ♕b6 36.b3 ♗f6 37.♗f3 ♔g7 38.♗e4 ♖e7 39.♗d3 ♕e6 40.♗c4 ♕e4

Ponomariov is not maneuvering in the best possible fashion. Karpov now manages to improve the position of his pieces and get some counterplay.

41.♕d1 b6 42.♖d6 ♖c7 43.♕f3

43.a4 was more precise.

43...♕xf3 44.gxf3 b5!

Ponomariov evidently missed this counterstrike.

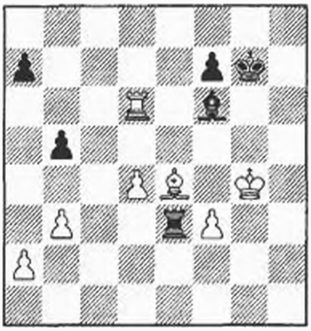
45.♗d3

After 45.♗xb5 ♖c2+ 46.♔g1 ♖xa2 White's win would have become absolutely problematic.

45...♖c3 46.♗e4 ♖e3

Black's rook became extremely active and White was forced to give back one of the extra pawns. The overall evaluation of the position still has not changed indeed.

47.h4!? gxh4 48.gxh4 ♗xh4 49.♔h3 ♗f6 50.♔g4



This march of the white king is destined to decide the issue.

50...a5 51.♔f5 ♗e7 52.♖a6 ♗b4 53.♖a7 ♖e2 54.a3 ♗xa3 55.♖xa5 b4 56.♖b5 ♖d2 57.d5 ♖h2 58.♖b6 ♖h5+ 59.♔g4 ♖h8 60.♗d3 ♖d8 61.♗c4 ♔f8 62.d6 ♗b2 63.♔f5 ♗d4 64.♖c6 ♗c3 65.♖a6 ♔e8 66.♔e4 ♗d2 67.f4 ♔f8 68.f5 ♔g7 69.♗b5 ♔f6 70.d7+

Karpov was defending heroically but after White's d-pawn reached the 7th rank he had to comply with the inevitable...

70...♔g5 71.♖a7 ♗c3 72.♖c7 ♗b2 73.♗d3 ♗f6 74.♔d5 ♖h8 75.♖c8 ♗d8 76.♖xd8! 1–0

After 76...♖d8 77.♔d6 ♔f6 78.♔c7 ♔e7 79.f6, Black loses his rook.

84 **B12**

Shirov – Topalov

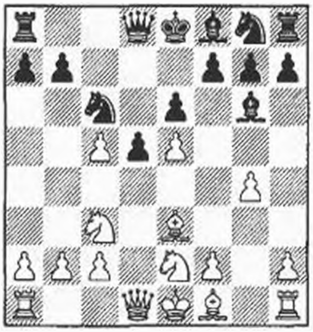
Round 12 25.01

Notes by S. Shipov

Alexey had an excellent chance to rejoin the leading group after this game. He played the opening superbly and had an overwhelming attack, but failed to crown it with the logical end. Vesselin defended very stubbornly and deserved to share the point.

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 ♗f5 4.♘c3 e6 5.g4 ♗g6 6.♘ge2 c5 7.♗e3 ♘c6 8.dxc5

Shirov was quite willing to repeat the line that was played in his game against Anand only two rounds before. His play in that game was so easy to be improved, indeed...



8...h5

Vesselin is on the alert! The above-mentioned game continued: 8...♘xe5 9.♘f4 ♘e7 10.♕e2! ♘7c6 11.0–0–0 and White had an excellent attacking position.

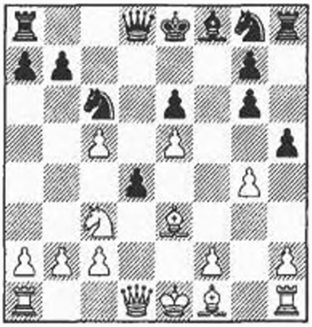
9.♘f4

White exploits the weakened placement of the bishop on g6.

9...d4

He will need to pay for his entertainment the price of a piece-sacrifice.

10.♘xg6 fxg6



11.♕d3!N

This is just another very interesting novelty! The players in that tournament made a quite considerable contribution to the development of the opening theory... White had tried here before 11.♗d3 ♘xe5 12.♗b5+ ♔f7 13.f4 dxe3 14.♕xd8 ♘f3+ 15.♔e2 ♖xd8 16.♔xf3 hxg4+ 17.♔xe3 ♗xc5+ 18.♔e2 ♘f6 and Black was better, De Vreugt – Maksimenko, Lviv 2001.

11...♔f7

In case of 11...♘xe5 White has the powerful resource 12.♕b5+ ♘c6 (12...♕d7 13.0–0–0!) 13.0–0–0! and he has a strong attack without sacrificing anything.

12.0–0–0 dxc3

After 12...dxe3 13.♕xe3 ♕c7 14.♘e4! Black will hardly survive.

13.♕xc3 ♕c7 14.♗c4

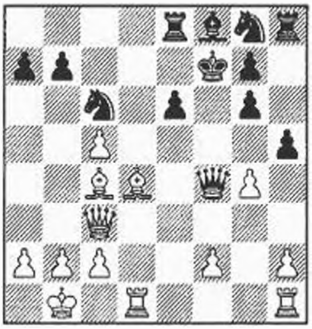
Alexey is developing his pieces regardless of the material losses. Each tempo is as valuable as gold!

14...♕xe5 15.♗d4 ♕f4+ 16.♔b1

White has a superior compensation for the sacrificed piece and the quantity of the pawns is presently immaterial.

16...♖e8

Black is defending his most vulnerable pawn in advance.



17.g5!

This is a wonderful idea! White blocks Black's kingside and the capture of that pawn will just open one more file for the white rooks.

17...♕xg5

Black does not have much of a choice. He cannot use the e7 square for development – 17...♘ge7 18.♗xe6+! ♚xe6 19.♕c4+ ♘d5 (19...♔f5 20.♕f7+) 20.♖he1+ ♔d7 21.♕xd5+ and White either checkmates or wins plenty of material.

18.♖hg1

The position is so abundant with possibilities that both opponents had to make really difficult choices on every move. It is hardly conceivable that they did everything right, though...It looked very strong for White here to play 18.f4!?.

18...♕h4 19.♖ge1! ♘f6 20.♕b3!

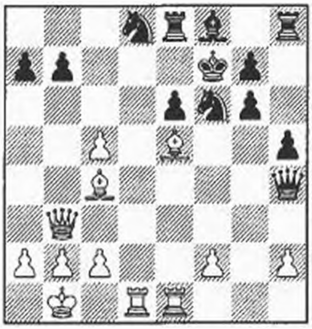
White's pressure against the e6-pawn increases with every move.

20...♘d8

Black is with his back up to the ropes, because the capturing of the bishop leads to a spectacular checkmate – 20...♘xd4 21.♖xd4 ♕xd4 22.♗xe6+ ♔e7 23.♕xb7+ ♔d8 24.♕b8+ ♔e7 25.♗d5+ ♔d7 (25...♘e4 26.♕d6#) 26.c6#.

21.♗e5

The line 21.♗xf6 gxf6 22.♖d7+ ♗e7 23.♗xe6+ ♔f8 seemed attractive, but... then what? There was no forced win so White decided to preserve the tension and to avoid exchanges!



21...♔g8?

In case of 21...♗e7! White can gradually squeeze the black queen with – 22.♗g3 ♕h3 23.♗f1! ♕g4 24.h3 ♕g5 25.♖e5 ♕h6 and later continue to attack the weak pawn with – 26.♗c4!

22.♗g3?

This was a blunder and both opponents missed the resource 22.♕a4!, after which White wins very quickly. He creates two threats – to capture on e6 with a check winning the queen and also to take on f6 after which the rook on e8 is hanging.

22...♕g5 23.♖e5 ♕h6 24.h4

White fixes the g5-square just in case.

24...♔h7 25.♖g5

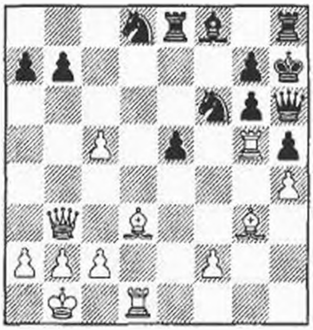
It was very strong for White to play here 25.♗d3!?, keeping the e6-pawn blocked. Meanwhile after 25...♘d7

White should not play 26.♖g5 ♘xc5!, but 26.♕a4! ♘c6 and only then 27.♖g5. The point is that after 27...♘xc5 28.♖xc5 ♗xc5 thanks to the placement of the white queen on a4 he has the threat to play 29.♗f4 winning the queen.

25...e5!

White could counter 25...♘e4 with 26.♕e3! and if 26...♘xg5? 27.hxg5 and Black loses his queen.

26.♗d3



26...♘e6

Vesselin is happy to be able to reduce the material a bit. After 26...e4!? 27.♗b5 ♘c6 28.♗e2 ♘d8 White can repeat the moves, which is understandably not acceptable for him. Instead he can continue playing for a win with 29.♗f4!.

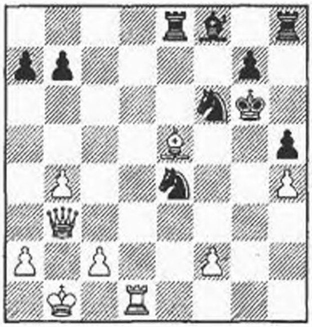
27.♖xg6 ♕xg6 28.♗xg6+ ♔xg6 29.♗xe5 ♘xc5 30.♕g3+ ♔f7

Black has a rook, a bishop and a knight for a queen and a pawn. He has a perfect deal concerning quantity of material, but his real problem is that he has not completed his development yet. White's attack continues!

31.b4! ♘ce4

31...♘e6 32.f4!.

32.♕b3+ ♔g6



This exciting game has reached its critical point!

33.♗xf6?

This was probably just due to tiredness and was essentially a termination of the fight. White preserved good winning chances after 33.♗d4! with the idea to repel the knight on e4 with f2-f3. Black's problem was that he had only one good reliable square – f6 for his two knights. There might follow: 33...♖d8 (33...♖h6 34.♗e3!) 34.f3 (34.c3 seems also very strong for White) 34...♘g3 (it is too bad for Black to play 34...♘d6 35.♖g1+ ♔h7 36.♕d3+) 35.c3! (this move solidifies the position and enables the white queen to pin the black knight on f5 from the c2-square) 35...♗d6 (Black's situation will not be any better after the exchange sacrifice on d4.) 36.♖g1 ♖he8 (Black will have to give up one of the pieces after all – 36...♔h6 37.♗e3+ ♔h7 38.♗f2 ♘f5 39.♕f7! followed by a check on g6.) 37.♗f2 ♖e2 38.♗xg3 ♗xg3 39.♖xg3+ ♔h6 40.♖g1 ♘d5 41.♔a1! – and White must win at the end of this rather long variation.

33...♘xf6 34.♖g1+ ♔h7

Black's position now is quite reliable and if he manages to complete his development White might be in a real trouble, so...

35.♕d3+ ♔g8 36.♕c4+ ♔h7 ½ – ½

85 C11

Anand – Bareev

Round 13 26.01

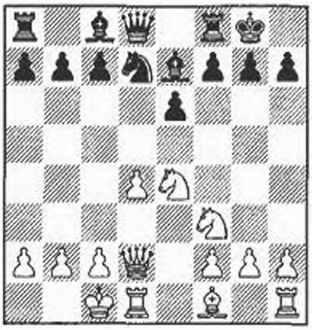
1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.♗g5 dxe4

This move had the reputation to lead to relatively dull positions, but lately plenty of interesting ideas were found.

5.♘xe4 ♗e7 6.♗xf6 ♗xf6 7.♘f3 ♘d7 8.♕d2

White prepares castling long.

8...0–0 9.0–0–0 ♗e7



This is the critical position of the line with White castling long. Bareev has been defending it successfully numerous times against world's best players.

10.♗c4

Khalifman, Shirov and Yermolinsky played like that against Bareev before. Essentially this move has a certain drawback – White's light-squared bishop comes quickly under the attack of Black's pawns. Kasparov with White against Bareev played a clever move – 10.♕c3. Anand is quite familiar with that position too. He played against Radjabov in his game in the year 2002 the aggressive move: 10.h4 immediately. White's strongest move here probably is 10.♗d3 and it is the most popular too.

10...a6

After 10...♘f6 11.♖he1 ♘d5 12.♘e5 f5 13.♗xd5! exd5 14.♘c5 ♗g5 15.f4 ♗f6 16.h3 ♕d6 17.♘cd3 b6 18.g4! White obtained a wonderful attacking position in the game, Shirov – Bareev, New Delhi 2000.

11.♗b3 a5

The game Khalifman – Bareev, Belgrade 1993, continued with 11...c6 12.♕f4 b5 13.h4 ♖a7 14.♘eg5 ♘f6 15.c3 ♕c7 and Black had an excellent game. We cannot tell how Anand intended to improve Khalifman's play, because Bareev decided to try a new move first.

12.♗c4 c6 13.♔b1 ♕c7 14.h4 ½ – ½

Both sides, Black as well as White is now quite well prepared to start an assault against the enemy position and suddenly...a draw was agreed to.

86 D27

Ivanchuk – Ponomariov

Round 13 26.01

Notes by M. Notkin

1.♘f3 d5 2.d4 ♘f6 3.c4 dxc4 4.e3 e6 5.♗xc4 a6 6.0–0 c5 7.dxc5 ♗xc5 8.♕e2 b5

Many people play 8...♘c6 or 8...♕c7.

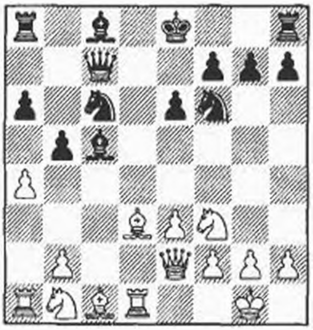
9.♗d3 ♘c6 10.♖d1

White has a variety of plans – 1) 10.a3 followed by b4 and ♗b2; 2)

10.♘c3 with ideas of e4 or ♘e4; 3) 10.♘bd2 and the knight can go to e4 again or to b3.

10...♕c7 11.a4

This position arose a few times in games of the 1930's. Salo Flohr played it with Black against three World Champions.



11...b4

Flohr tried this advance against Alekhine (Bled 1931) and Euwe (Amsterdam/Karlsbad 1932) and lost both games. This made him turn to the pawn exchange. The position after 11...bxa4 had already been met in Wijk aan Zee. Krasenkow against Shirov played 12.♖xa4 ♘b4 13.♗b5+ ♘d7 14.♗d2 and Black couldn't solve the new problems and lost.

12.♘bd2 ♗b7

Alekhine – Flohr went 12...0–0 13.♘b3 ♗e7 14.e4 ♘d7 15.♗e3 and the weakness of the c5-square soon cost Black. Against Euwe Flohr prevented 12...♘b3 by means of 12...♘a5 but after 13.b3 ♘d5 14.♗b2 ♘c3 15.♗xc3 bxc3 16.♘e4 ♘xb3 17.♖ab1 ♘a5 18.♖dc1! White obtained a strong initiative and won quickly – 18...♗e7 19.♖xc3 ♕d8 20.♖d1 ♕b6 21.♘fg5 g6 22.♕f3 0–0 23.♘f6+ ♗xf6 24.♕xf6 ♗b7 25.♘xh7! ♖fd8 (25...♔xh7 26.♗xg6+ ♔g8 27.♖d7+–) 26.h4 ♖d7 27.h5 ♕d8 28.h6! 1–0.

13.♘b3 ♘a5

Ruslan takes an unusual decision to give up the bishop. I believe there's nothing wrong with 13...♗d6 14.e4 0–0.

14.♘xc5 ♕xc5 15.e4 ♘b3 16.♖b1

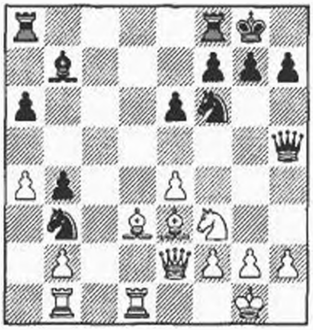
16.♗e3?! suggests itself but after 16...♕h5 White loses the e4-pawn.

16...0–0

The exchange 16...♘xc1 gives White a huge advantage in development. After 17.♖bxc1 ♕b6 (17...♕h5 18.♖c7; 17...♕a5 18.♘d2) 18.♘e5 0–0 19.♘c4 followed by e4-e5 the white knight gets an excellent outpost while the queen will provoke weaknesses in his opponent's kingside by ♕h5 or ♕e4 in case of ♘f6-d5.

17.♗e3 ♕h5

The retreat along the c-file 17...♕c6 allows White to set an unpleasant opposition by 18.♗c2 ♘c5 (18...♘a5 19.♖bc1) 19.♖bc1! (the ideas of ♗xc5, e5, ♗xh7+ are in the air) 19...♘cxe4 20.♖d4 and Black's pieces lack stability.



18.♕c2!

Now 18.♗c2 ♘c5 doesn't hurt at all.

18...♘a5 19.♖bc1

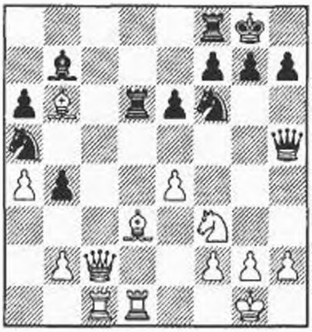
19.♕c5, which looks dangerous, is met by 19...♕xc5 20.♗xc5 ♖fd8 21.♗xb4 ♖xd3! 22.♖xd3 ♗xe4 23.♖bd1 ♗xd3 24.♖xd3 ♘c6 and ♘d5 equalizing.

19...♖ad8?!

Maybe after 19...♖ac8 Ponomariov disliked 20.♕e2 aiming at the a6-pawn. In the event of 19...♖fc8 White can play 20.♕d2 this time having the b4-pawn as a target and using the fact that 20...♘b3? is parried by the in-between check on c8. Nevertheless one of these moves should have been chosen.

20.♗b6 ♖d6?

Apparently the FIDE World Champion overlooked White's next move. 20...♖xd3 won't do on account of 21.♕xd3 ♗xe4 22.♕xa6 ♗xf3 23.gxf3 ♘b3 24.♖c8 winning; 20...♖c8 was essential.



21.♕c5!

Most likely he counted on 21.♗c5 ♖c6 and the white bishop is in danger; or 21.♗xa5 ♕xa5 22.e5 ♖c6 and Black's pieces escape the double attack.

21...♕xc5 22.♗xc5

The game is over. Ivanchuk is not in hurry to take the rook and he is rewarded with a knight for his patience.

22...♖d7 23.♘e5!? ♖dd8 24.♗xb4 ♘b3 25.♖c3 ♖fe8

25...♘d4 26.♗xf8 ♔xf8 27.♖c7.

26.♖xb3 ♗xe4 27.f3 ♗f5 28.♖d2 ♖b8 29.♗xa6 1–0

87 E34

Karpov – Kramnik

Round 13 26.01

The last round is usually a bit special. This game transferred quickly into an equal endgame and the opponents did not even try to fight seriously. They were obviously too tired.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.♕c2 d5 5.cxd5 ♕xd5 6.e3 c5 7.dxc5

The more popular move 7.♗d2 was played in two games of Evgeny Bareev – against Topalov and Ivanchuk (Wijk aan Zee 2003).

7...♕xc5

After 7...♘e4 White was slightly better in the game Bareev – Gelfand, Monaco 2003: 8.♘ge2 ♘xc5 9.♘g3 0–0 10.♗d2 ♕c6 11.a3 ♗xc3 12.♕xc3±.

8.♗d2 ♘c6 9.♖c1 0–0

White now forces numerous exchanges and a draw as a consequence.

10.a3 ♗xc3 11.♗xc3 ♘d5 12.♘f3 ♘xc3 13.♕xc3 ♕xc3+ 14.♖xc3 ♗d7 15.♗d3 ½ – ½

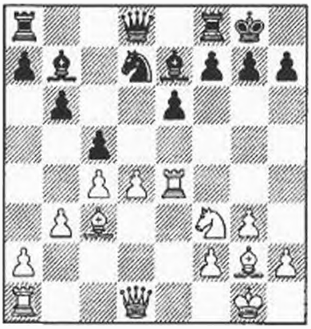
88 E15

Radjabov – Ju.Polgar

Round 13 26.01

Judit Polgar demonstrated in this game that she was satisfied with her second place in the tournament and she made a quick draw. Meanwhile Anand and Bareev also drew.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 b6 4.g3 ♗a6 5.b3 ♗b4+ 6.♗d2 ♗e7 7.♗g2 c6 8.♗c3 d5 9.♘bd2 ♘bd7 10.0–0 0–0 11.♖e1 c5 12.e4 dxe4 13.♘xe4 ♘xe4 14.♖xe4 ♗b7



This position is already well familiar.

15.♖e1

White usually retreats here 15.♖e3 to be able to counter 15...♗f6 with 16.dxc5 or 16.♖d3.

15...♗f6 16.♕d2

After 16.♘e5 the game quickly ends in a draw 16...♗xg2 17.♔xg2 cxd4 18.♗xd4 ♘xe5 19.♗xe5 ♗xe5 Ribli – Sax, Porz 2000.

16...♕c7 17.dxc5

White preserves some pressure after 17.♖ad1, for example: 17...♖fd8 18.♕e3 cxd4 19.♗xd4 h6 20.♖d2 ♖ac8 21.♖ed1± Graf – Joachim, Bremen 2002.

17...♗xc3 18.♕xc3 ♘xc5 19.♖ad1 ½ – ½

89 **B50**

Timman – Krasenkow

Round 13 26.01

Notes by S. Shipov

This game was played between two of the failures of the tournament. These players were rather tired and they lacked confidence but they were still kicking!

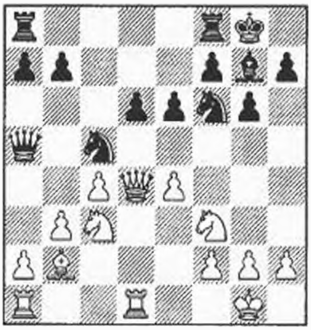
1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 e6 3.b3 d6 4.♗b5+ ♗d7 5.♗xd7+ ♘xd7

This is a quiet and modest line. White is practically not fighting for an opening advantage.

6.c4 ♘gf6 7.♘c3 g6 8.0–0 ♗g7 9.d4 0–0 10.♗b2

The two opposing bishops are already poised for action. Time to spill some blood!

10...cxd4 11.♕xd4 ♕a5 12.♖fd1 ♘c5



The tension in the centre reaches its boiling point. Exchanges are unavoidable.

13.e5 dxe5 14.♕xe5?!

This is of course a mistake but I do not think that Jan blundered. He was in an enterprising mood, he had nothing to lose and he wanted to have fun and amuse the spectators! And how he did it! I put one more exclamation mark to his move because of the thankful audience and the exhausted commentators. The tentative 14.♘xe5 ♘fd7 15.f4 ♖fd8 16.♕e3, or 14...♘g4 15.♕xg4 ♗xe5 16.♕f3 was leading to approximately equal positions.

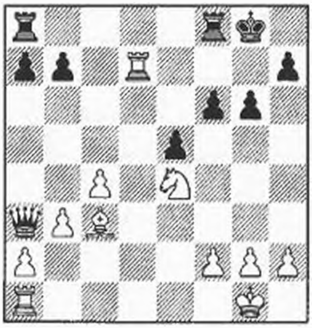
14...♘fe4

Now, forward we go!

15.♕xg7+! ♔xg7 16.♘xe4+ f6 17.♗c3 ♕a3 18.♘fg5! ♘xe4 19.♖d7+ ♔g8

After 19...♔h6 we could have witnessed the following enjoyable variation: 20.♘xe4 ♖ad8 (20...e5 21.♗d2+ g5 22.♗c1 ♕b4 23.♗d2=) 21.♖xb7 ♕xa2 22.h4 ♕xa1+ 23.♗xa1 ♖d1+ 24.♔h2 ♖xa1 25.g4 and White is at least not worse.

20.♘xe4 e5



This is it – the dream position of the imaginative player. White has only two pieces for the queen but he is attacking!

21.g4

This move is with the threat to play g4-g5. The immediate attack of the e5-pawn fails: 21.f4 ♖ae8! – and after the opening of the position Black's heavy pieces will become even more powerful.

21...♖f7 22.♖d5! g5

This move facilitates White's initiative because now his knight becomes very strong. Black had better play 22...♖af8, preparing for the opening of the game, because the straightforward 23.g5? fxg5! was not good for White.

23.♘d6 ♖d7

It was too risky for Black to give up the b7-pawn – 23...♖ff8 24.♘xb7 ♖ab8 25.♘d6 ♖bd8 26.c5 ♕a6 27.♖d2 ♕c6 28.♗a5! ♖d7 29.♖c1 and Black would hardly win that position.

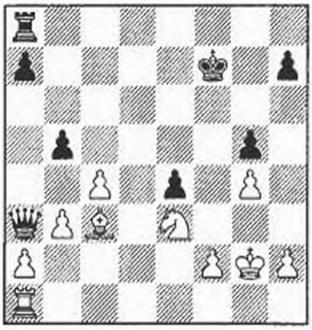
24.♘e4 ♖xd5

Black's intent to simplify the game was quite understandable, but it was evidently better to play 24...♖f7 25.♘d6 ♖g7! 26.♘e4 (26.♘f5 ♖c7) 26...♖f8.

25.♘xf6+ ♔f7 26.♘xd5

White won a pawn and preserved the stability of his pieces.

26...e4 27.♔g2 b5 28.♘e3



Naturally, the best that White can hope for is a draw, no matter what happens. Black has a queen after all! Meanwhile it is not so easy to win with Black either, because White's fortress seems to be quite reliable.

28...♖c8 29.♗e5 bxc4 30.bxc4

Black can counter 30.♘xc4 with 30...♖xc4! 31.bxc4 ♕f3+ 32.♔g1 ♕xg4+ and the h7-pawn goes triumphantly forward winning the game.

30...♖d8 31.♖b1!

It is time for White to activate the rook.

31...♖d2 32.♖b3 ♕xa2

Black's main asset now is the passed a7-pawn.

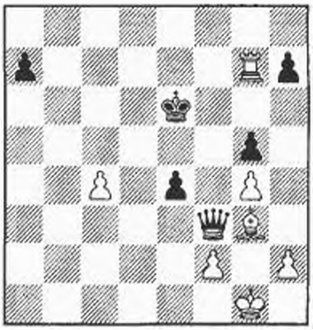
33.♖b7+ ♔e6 34.♗g3 ♕a3

After 34...a5 35.♖b6+ the black king will hardly avoid the perpetual.

35.♘f5 ♖d7 36.♘g7+ ♖xg7

Michail probably missed in the time-trouble the possibility to avoid the checks without material losses – 36...♔e7 37.♘f5+ ♔e8 38.♘g7+ ♔d8!.

37.♖xg7 ♕f3+ 38.♔g1 ♕d1+ 39.♔g2 ♕f3+ 40.♔g1



Black continues to have great winning chances. He had simply to push forward his passed pawn. Krasenkow however kept on not doing that at crucial moments for some reason...

40...e3

It was much stronger for Black to play 40...a5 41.♖xg5 a4 42.♖e5+ ♔f6 43.♖a5 (43.♖f5+? ♕xf5 44.gxf5 a3–+) 43...♕xg4 44.c5 ♕d1+ 45.♔g2 e3!–+.

41.fxe3 ♕xe3+ 42.♗f2 ♕c1+ 43.♔g2 a5 44.♖a7 ♕d2 45.h3 ♕b4 46.c5!

This is White's counterplay.

46...♕b5?

This misses the win irrevocably. Black had to play 46...a4!.

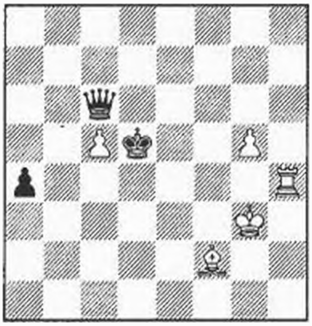
47.♖xh7! ♕c6+

47...a4!?.

48.♔g3 ♔d5 49.h4!

White is not worse anymore. He has two passed pawns now!

49...gxh4+ 50.♖xh4 a4 51.g5



I admit I was already thinking during the game that Black might even lose. That would have been a real drama! It was a happy end eventually...

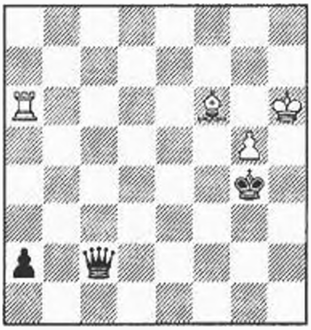
51...a3 52.♖h6 ♕a8 53.♖d6+ ♔e4 54.♗d4

This bishop is destined to perish on a1 at the end.

54...a2 55.♔g4 ♕a4

Black is threatening to capture on d4. The line 55...a1♕ 56.♗xa1 ♕xa1 57.♖f6 ♕g1+ 58.♔h5 ♕xc5 59.♔h6 leads to a theoretical draw.

56.♗a1 ♕c4 57.♔h5 ♕xc5 58.♖e6+ ♔f4 59.♖f6+ ♔g3 60.♖a6 ♕c2 61.♔h6 ♔g4 62.♗f6



This is a fortress and the opponents

could have agreed to a draw right then...

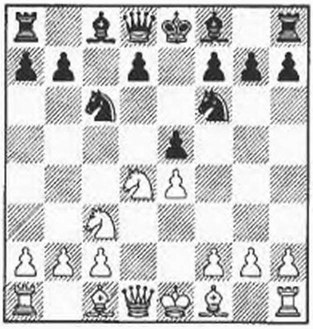
62...♕d2 63.♖a7 ♕h2+ 64.♔g6 ♕c2+ 65.♔h6 ♕d2 66.♔g6 ♕b4 67.♔h6 ♕f8+ 68.♔g6 ♕g8+ 69.♔h6 ♕f8+ 70.♔g6 ♕g8+ ½ – ½

This was a spectacular show, but at the same time a nerve consuming test for both players too.

90 **B33**

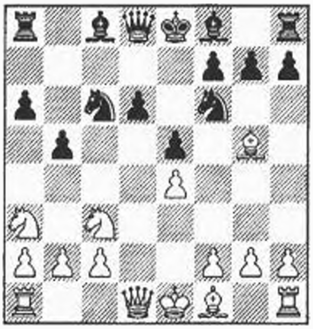
Topalov – Grischuk
Round 13 26.01

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 e5



The Sveshnikov Variation starting with this move is very popular presently among the top-level players. There are several reasons for that. Black does not surrender space to the opponent (contrary to the lines that he plays e6 instead of e5) and has an active counterplay. Secondly White needs to play unclear non-standard positions with quite strange strategical fine points and often with non-balanced material. The player who feels the hidden dynamics and calculates variations better usually triumphs in the end. Last but not least the character of the play is very sharp and often forced and the home preparation is of tremendous importance. Black must pay a certain price for the right to have the initiative. He weakens the d5-square, he has to take gxf6 in answer to ♗xf6 in all critical lines and that weakens additionally his kingside. Black's queenside is rather feeble after the pawn move b7-b5 anyway, so in fact Black's whole pawn structure consists of weak pawns all over the board. White often manages to win a pawn or two here and there, but Black usually has an active piece play and pawn breaks like f5 and b4 as a compensation.

6.♘db5 d6 7.♗g5 a6 8.♘a3 b5



9.♗xf6

Black is now forced to capture with the pawn. This presently happens to be White's main road to a fight for an opening advantage. The calmer variation 9.♘d5 ♗e7 10.♗xf6 ♗xf6 leads usually to a small edge for White which is hardly sufficient to win the game. This is one of the main features of the contemporary tournament chess nowadays – you need to be ready to go to a complicated double-edged fight in order to beat a really strong opponent.

9...gxf6 10.♘d5 f5 11.c3

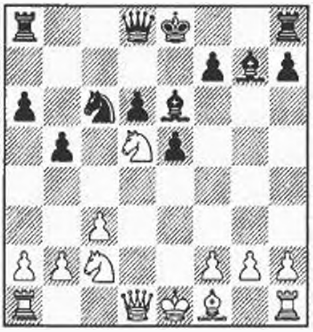
The line 11.♗d3 ♗e6 is also quite popular.

11...♗g7

Theory considers taking on e4 to be very dangerous: 11...fxe4 12.♗xb5 axb5 13.♘xb5. Black does not have now the important check on a5 with the queen because of the move c2-c3. White is threatening 14.♘bc7+ ♔d7 15.♕g4+, so Black must play 13...♗e6 14.♘bc7+ ♔d7 15.♘xa8 ♗xd5 16.♕xd5, and White's rook and a couple of pawns are stronger than Black's two light pieces because the black king is rather exposed.

12.exf5 ♗xf5 13.♘c2 ♗e6

This is the main line and the move in the game is trickier than 13...0–0. The black bishop will have to retreat anyway after ♘ce3, so Black can save the tempo for his castling for a while.



14.a4

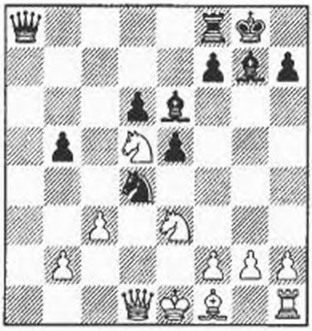
This is an attempt by White to start immediate actions on the queenside without the necessary preparation to castle first. Anand and Kasparov have played like this already, but Black managed to draw in both games. The usual plan with 14.♘ce3 is not very effective for White lately due to the line 14...♘e7. Black exchanges a couple of knights on d5 and then plays on the sides like (♖b8, a5, b4 on the queenside and f5-f4 or e4 on the kingside). Meanwhile the white knight on d5 is like the English Queen – "reigning but not ruling". It is placed beautifully and impressively, but does not affect much the events on the board really.

14...0–0 15.axb5 axb5 16.♖xa8 ♕xa8 17.♘ce3

17.♗xb5 ♘d4; 17.♘c7 ♕a2 18.♗xb5 ♕xb2 19.0–0 ♗b3 20.♗xc6 ♕xc2∞ Baklan – Eljanov, Polanica Zdroj 2001.

17...♘d4

17...♕b7 18.g4 (Anand played against Lautier in Monaco 1999, 18.♗d3 f5 19.0–0 ♔h8, but had no advantage after the opening) 18...♘e7 19.♗g2 ♘xd5 20.♗xd5 ♕e7, and later Black succeeded to preserve the balance with the help of the manoeuvre ♖c8-c5 in the game Kasparov – Leko, Wijk aan Zee 2000.



18.♘c7

White should not capture that knight – 18.cxd4 exd4 19.♘e7+ ♔h8 20.♘3f5 ♗xf5 21.♘xf5 ♕e4+.

18...♕a2 19.♘xe6

After 19.cxd4 ♕a5+ 20.♕d2 ♕xc7 –

it is only Black who can think about an advantage.

19...♘xe6 20.♗d3

This move is in fact a novelty, but it is quite obvious that White must sacrifice the b2-pawn. In case of 20.♕c1?! and 20...d5 Black had better prospects in the game Wang Shuai – Gara, Budapest 2001.

20...♕xb2 21.0–0 ♘c5

Black cannot afford to capture the second pawn: 21...♕xc3 22.♗xh7+ ♔xh7 23.♕h5+ ♗h6 (the point is that after 23...♔g8 24.♘d5+– White is threatening the queen as well as ♘e7#) 24.♘g4 ♕d2 25.f4+– with a decisive attack for White.

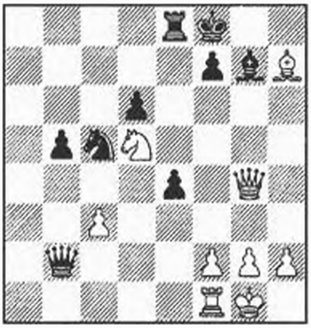
22.♗f5 e4

This move is quite standard for the Sveshnikov variation. Black might lose the e4-pawn in some lines indeed, but the activity of the dark squared bishop is more important. Black cannot capture the c3-pawn now, just like on the previous move, because of 22...♕xc3 23.♗xh7+.

23.♘d5 ♖e8 24.♕g4

White is threatening ♘f6 and Black must part with his material advantage.

24...♔f8 25.♗xh7



It is high time that we evaluated the results of the opening. White succeeded to obtain a stable advantage despite the material equality, mostly because of the difference between the placements of the kings. The white king is safe while its counterpart is endangered. Black still has his counterchances, since his king is not under an immediate attack yet and he will have a dangerous passed b-pawn if he manages to win the rather weak and vulnerable white c3-pawn.

25...♖e5?

This is a tactical blunder. It is not so easy however to find a sensible move for Black, because his knight, bishop and rook cannot move – they are all defending either the king or the e4-pawn. So he had to play with the queen and possibly the right move was 25...♕a2!?, attacking the knight on d5 and preparing the retreat to a7 with the queen just in case.

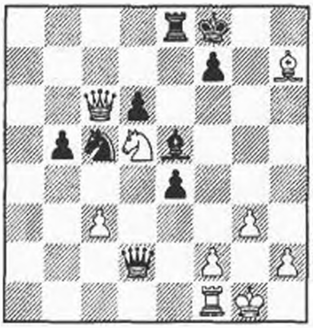
26.♕c8+?

White was winning with 26.♘c7! (he threatens a check on c8 and the black king will be in a mating net) 26...♘e6 (Black has no other way to defend the c8-square: 26...d5 27.♕c8+ ♔e7 28.♕e8+ ♔d6 29.♘xb5+–) 27.f4! exf3 28.♕xf3 ♘d8 (once again this seems to be the only way to defend the f7-square) 29.♕a8 ♔e7 30.♘d5 ♔d7 31.♕a7+ ♔e8 32.♗g6.

26...♖e8 27.♕c6

This is a wrong idea. The queen attacks from here several black pawns, but all too away from the black king. White probably had to repeat the position with – 27.♕g4!? and Black's problems would remain to be solved.

27...♗e5 28.g3 ♕d2



You see now that one of the consequences of the absence of the queen on g4 is the fact that White has to work hard to develop his rook on d1.

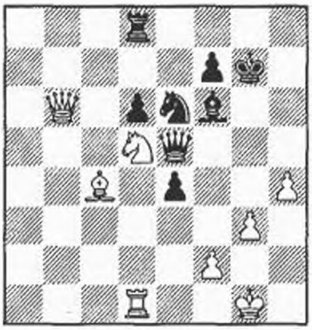
29.♗f5

The idea of this move is to put the rook on d1 as we have already mentioned.

29...♖d8 30.♗g4 ♗xc3 31.♖d1 ♕g5 32.♕b6 ♗f6 33.♗e2 ♔g7 34.h4 ♕e5 35.♗xb5

So finally Black managed to secure his king after White's pieces were redeployed away from the kingside deliberately. Black still has weak pawns and weak squares to worry about, though...

35...♘e6 36.♗c4



36...♕b2

This is a very good move. White must trade queens now and Black's defence without them will be much easier because the exposed position of his king will not matter anymore.

37.♕xb2 ♗xb2 38.♘e3 ♗e5 39.♗d5 ♘c5 40.♖b1 ♔g6 41.g4

White should not allow f7-f5.

41...♗f4 42.♔g2

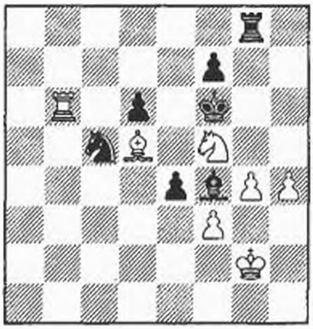
This was also necessary otherwise Black would have taken on e3, followed by ♖h8. White would have to push h4-h5 then and his kingside pawns would be useless.

42...♖h8 43.♘f5 ♔f6 44.♖b6

After 44.♖b4 Black had to play 44...♖g8 forcing the exchange of the f2 and e3-pawns with good drawing chances, but not 44...♔e5 45.♗xf7 d5 46.♖b5 ♖h7 47.♗g8 ♖h8 48.♖b8 (47...♖c7 48.♖b8) – and the black pawns are stopped while White remains with excellent winning chances (after 48.♖xc5 ♖xg8 White achieves nothing with 49.♖xd5+?! ♔xd5 50.♘e7+ ♔e6 51.♘xg8 ♔f7 52.g5 ♔xg8 53.♔h3= and the draw becomes a fact after the exchange of the last black pawn.

44...♖g8 45.f3

45.♔h3 will be countered by Black with 45... ♘d3!.



45...e3

This marks the beginning of a forced

variation since the next couple of moves of both sides are a must. Now after the trade 45...exf3+ 46.♔xf3 Black would have lost the d6-pawn immediately.

46.♗c4

White stops the e3-pawn and attacks the d6-pawn simultaneously.

46...♖d8 47.♔f1 ♘e6 48.♗xe6

Black was threatening d6-d5 followed by ♖c8.

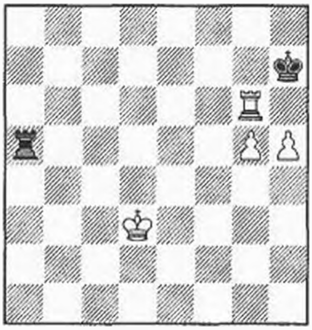
48...fxe6 49.♖b4 d5 50.♔e2 exf5 51.♖xf4 d4 52.♖xf5+ ♔g7 53.♖e5 d3+ 54.♔d1 e2+ 55.♔d2

The black pawns are stopped now and it looks like White can use the zugzwang and squeeze the black king gradually to promote his pawns. Suddenly Black finds a remarkable counter chance:

55...♔f6 56.♖e4 ♖d6 57.f4 ♔g6 58.h5+ ♔h6 59.♖e7 ♖d4! 60.♖e6+ ♔h7 61.g5 ♖xf4 62.♔xd3 ♖f5! 63.♖h6+

There is no other way for White to protect his pawns because the draw is automatic after the loss of one of them.

63...♔g7 64.♖g6+ ♔h7 65.♔xe2 ♖a5 66.♔d3 ½ – ½



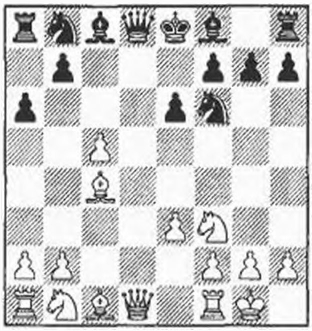
This is a well-known draw-position that Black was after. The white rook is misplaced and it cannot abandon the g6 square. If the white king goes forward in order to defend the g5-pawn – Black gives checks with the rook along the rank, deflects it away from the g5 pawn and then goes back to a5. End of story.

91 D27

Van Wely – Shirov

Round 13 26.01

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.e3 e6 5.♗xc4 c5 6.0–0 a6 7.dxc5



7...♗xc5

The reputation of the following line is good for Black: 7...♕xd1 8.♖xd1 ♗xc5 9.♘bd2 0–0 (it is not so favourable for Black to play: 9...♘bd7 10.♗e2 b6 11.♘b3 ♗e7 12.♘fd4 ♗b7 13.f3 0–0, because after 14.e4 ♖fc8 15.♗e3 ♔f8 16.♘d2 ♘e5 17.♘4b3 ♖c6 18.♖ac1 ♖ac8 19.♖xc6 ♖xc6 20.g4↑ in the game Kramnik – Kasparov, London (m/4) 2000, White managed to preserve some positional pressure) 10.♗e2 and now after 10...♖d8! Black equalizes easily. It is not good for White to continue simplifying by exchanging the rooks along the d-file, because he loses the initiative. There might follow: 11.b3 (11.♘e5 ♗e7 12.b3 ♘d5 13.♗b2 f6 14.♘d3 ♘c6= Kramnik – Kasparov, Moscow (m/1) 2001) 11...b6 12.♗b2 ♗b7 13.♖ac1 ♘bd7 14.♘c4 ♖ac8 15.♔f1 ♗d5 16.♘ce5 ♘xe5 17.♘xe5 b5 (it is weaker for Black to play 17...a5, because of 18.♗a6 ♖a8 19.♗b5 ♖ac8 20.h3 ♗e4 21.♖xd8+ ♖xd8 22.f3 ♗g6 23.e4± as in the game Kramnik – Anand, Leon (advance, m/5) 2002) 18.♗f3 ♗f8 19.♔e2 ♘e4= and the position was approximately equal in the game Karpov – Ivanchuk, Moscow (active) 2002.

8.♕xd8+ ♔xd8

The black king remained in the centre. This will be advantageous for him if the position gets simplified additionally. Presently however there are plenty of pieces on the board and the black king might become a target for an attack by White.

9.♘e5 ♔e7 10.♗e2 ♘bd7 11.♘d3 ♗d6 12.♘d2 ♘c5!?

The move 12...b5?! is imprecise because of the standard manoeuvre of the white knight 13.♘b3! ♘b6 14.♘a5 ♗d7 15.♘b7 ♖hc8 16.♘xd6 ♔xd6 17.f3± and White had the edge in the game Zubarev – Savon, Ordzhonikidze 2001.

13.♘c4 ♘xd3 14.♗xd3 ♗c5=

It is becoming evident now that White did not get any advantage out of the opening. The position is equal.

15.♗e2 ♖d8?!

According to Shirov it was more precise for Black to play 15...♗d7 16.♗f3 ♗b5 17.b3 ♖ab8=.

16.b3 ♗d7 17.♗f3 ♘d5

Shirov did not like 17...♖ab8 because of 18.♘a5. If we continue that line with 18...♗b4 19.♘xb7 ♖dc8 (with the idea to trap the knight after 20...♗c6) 20.a3 ♗c3 21.a4 ♗b4 (21...♗xa1? 22.♗a3+ ♔e8 23.♘d6±) 22.♗a3 ♗xa3 23.♖xa3 ♗c6 24.♗xc6 ♖xc6 25.♘a5 ♖c2=∞ it becomes clear that Black has a sufficient compensation for the pawn.

18.♗b2 f6 19.♖ac1?!

White had better increase the pressure against the knight on d5 with the immediate 19.♖fd1!.

19...♖dc8!

White keeps the option to play ♘c4-a5-b7, so Black must put on c8 the rook from the d-file.

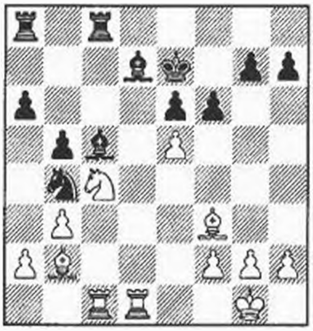
20.♖fd1 b5 21.e4?

The Dutch grandmaster is obviously overestimating his chances. After the natural 21.♘d2 ♗b4= the position would have remained equal.

21...♘b4

White now must worry about both his knight and the a2-pawn, so his next move is practically forced:

22.e5



22...♘xa2!

Shirov exploits the opportune moment and enters complications. It is fair to mention that after 22...♗c6 23.♗xc6 ♘xc6 24.exf6+ gxf6 25.♘e3 ♘b4= Black cannot get any advantage.

23.♖c2?

Van Wely makes a serious mistake the moment he is confronted with a real problem. The other line: 23.♖a1? was not better than the line in the game because of 23...bxc4 24.♗xa8 c3!! (that is the point, otherwise after 24...cxb3 25.exf6+ gxf6 26.♗b7 ♗xf2+ 27.♔xf2 ♖c2+ 28.♔e1 ♖xb2 29.♖db1= or 24...♖xa8 25.♖xa2 cxb3 26.♖aa1∞ Black has nothing to brag about) 25.♖xa2 cxb2 26.exf6+ gxf6 27.♗b7 ♖b8 28.♗xa6 ♖xb3 29.♖b1 ♗d4∓ and Black's powerful passed b2-pawn makes White's position very difficult.

White's only chance was 23.♗xa8!. After 23...♘xc1 24.♗b7 ♘xb3 25.♗xc8 ♗xc8 26.♘d6 ♗xd6 27.♖xd6 ♘a5 28.♗c3 ♘c4 29.♖c6 ♔d7 30.♖xc4 bxc4 31.exf6 gxf6 32.♗xf6 ♔c6 (if 32...♔d6 with the idea to follow with e6-e5, then 33.♗c3=) 33.♔f1 ♔b5 34.♔e2 ♔b4 35.♔d2= (Shirov) and White preserves the equality thanks to the opposite-coloured bishops. Black however has a stronger resource 24...♘e2+! (recommended by M.Notkin) 25.♔f1 ♖c7 26.♘d6 ♗b4 27.♗xa6 ♖c2 28.♗a1 ♘f4∓ and although the material is equal Black is better, because his pieces are more active.

23...♘b4 24.♖cd2

After 24.♖c3 ♗c6 25.♗xc6 ♘xc6∓ White remained a pawn down too.

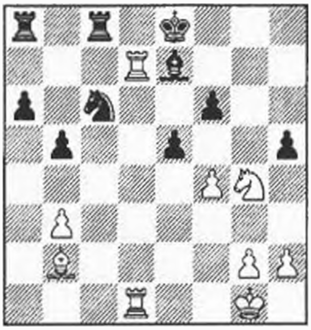
24...♗c6∓ 25.♗xc6 ♘xc6 26.exf6+

White does not have too many counterchances after 26.♘d6 ♗xd6 27.♖xd6 ♘xe5 28.f4 ♘g6–+ (Shirov).

26...gxf6 27.♖d7+ ♔e8 28.♘e3 ♗e7 29.♘g4!?

White is obliged to create some threats otherwise he has no chance to save the game after calmer developments.

29...e5 30.f4 h5



31.♘f2?!

This is facilitating Black's task. After 31.♘h6 ♖d8 (Black's attempt to penetrate the d4-square after 31...♘d4?! 32.♖b7⇄, as well as after 31...♗c5+ 32.♔f1 ♗d4 33.♖g7⇄ presents White with some chances for counterplay) 32.♖xd8+ ♖xd8 33.♖xd8+ ♗xd8∓ Shirov would need to play quite precisely in order to corner the full point.

31...♘d4–+

White is losing a second pawn now.

32.♖b7 ♘e2+ 33.♔f1 ♘xf4 34.♖dd7 ♘g6

It is obvious that White's threats along the 7th rank are just an illusion.

35.♘e4 ♖c6 36.h4 f5 37.♘g3 ♖d8 38.♖dc7 ♖xc7 39.♖xc7 ♖d1+ 40.♔e2 ♖g1 0–1 Scanned by ChessProf.

A Chessindia.net Community Release

The Corus chess tournament
Wijk an Zee, January 11 – 26, 2003

The winner Anand played effortlessly like always and finished undefeated

photo Jan van de Mortel

Karpov – Judit Polgar. The ex-world champion lost this game.

Topalov – Van Wely at the postmortem analysis.

photo Jan van de Mortel

The Corus chess tournament
Wijk an Zee, January 11 – 26, 2003

Vesselin Topalov missed his chance in the last round to join the big group of players with 7 points

photo Jan van de Mortel

Corus
Evgeny Bareev
Corus
Vesselin Topalov

Bareev was the hero of the start with two out of two

The local hero Timman had seen better times

photo Jan van de Mortel

The Corus chess tournament Wijk an Zee, January 11 - 26, 2003

The prize winners Anand and Polgar comment their game which ended in a draw

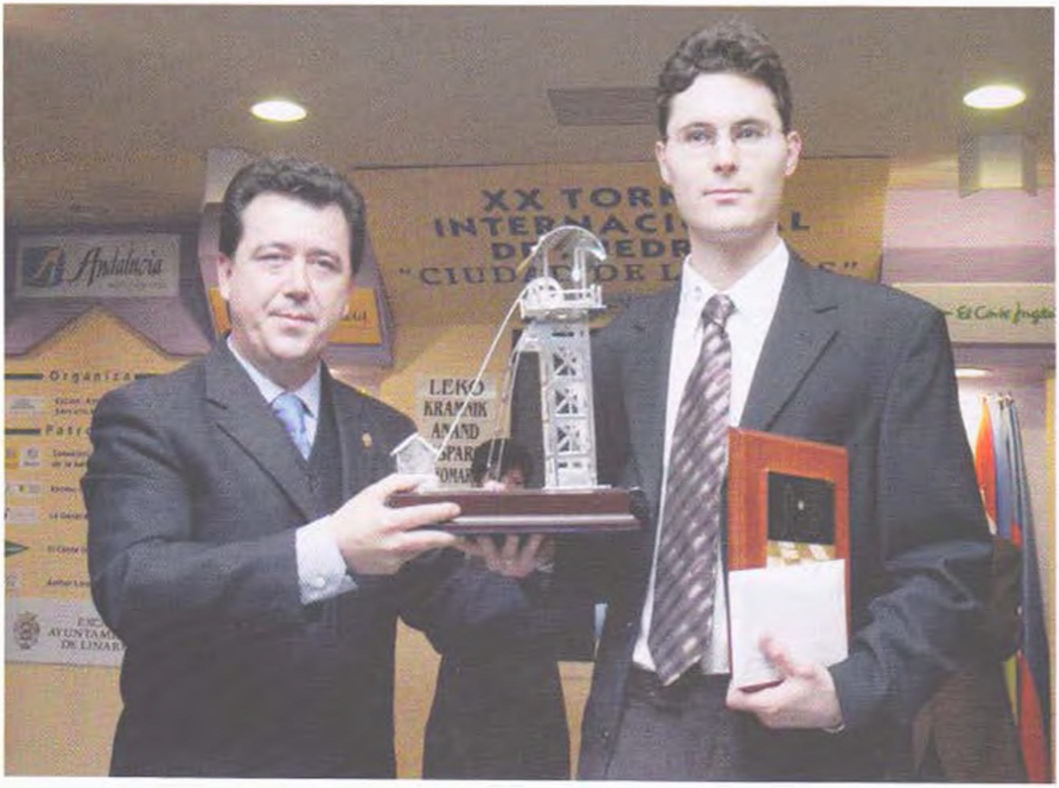
photo Jan van de Mortel

03/03/2003
KRAMNIK
PONOMARIOV

FIDE world champion Ponomariov is concentrating before round 9
Photo Manuel Fenollar

Linares, February 22 – March 9, 2003

The mayor of Linares is awarding Leko with his first Cabriola – the trophy for the winner
Photo Enrique Alonso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LEKO
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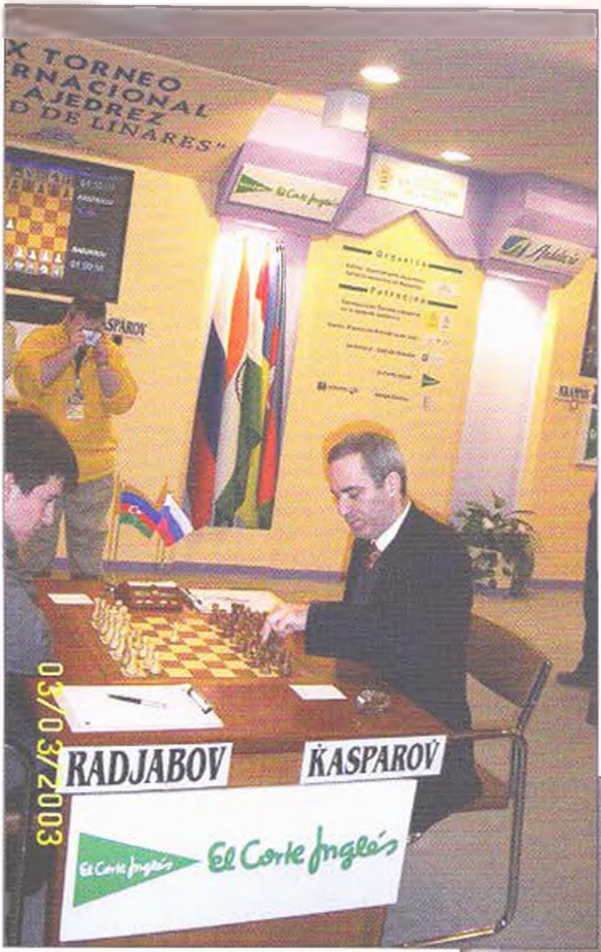
ANAND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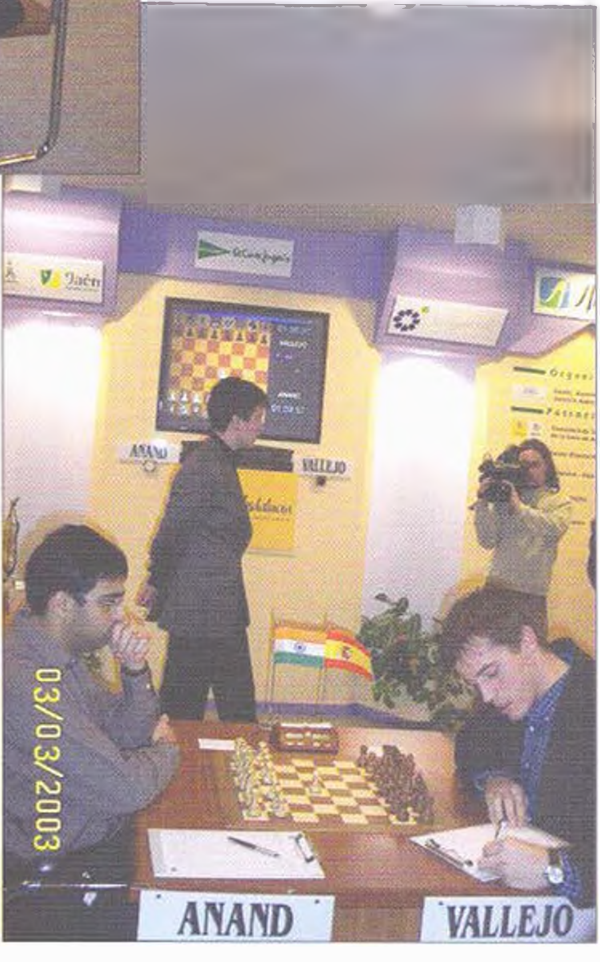
El Corte Inglés
03/03/2003

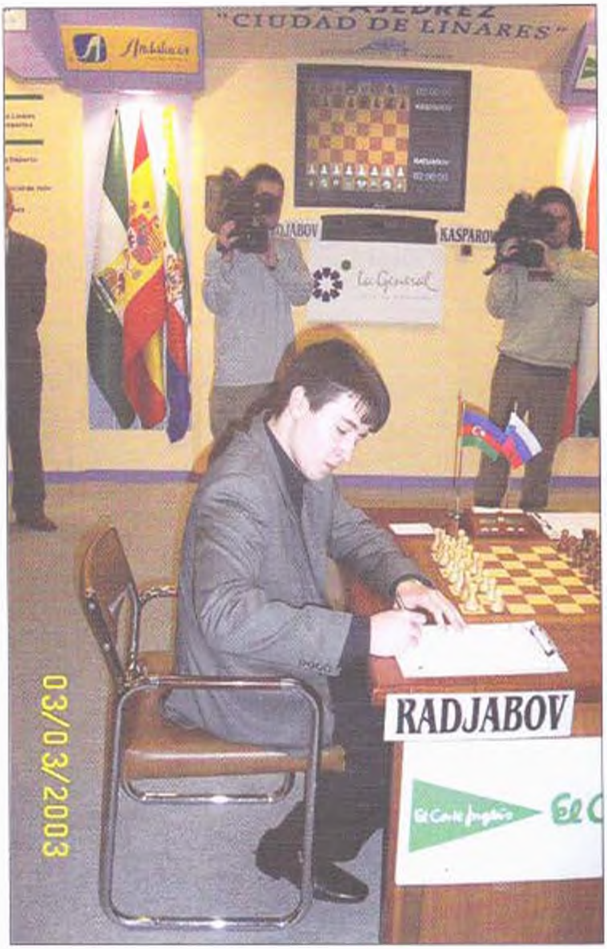
Photo Manuel Fenollar

Linares
February 22 – March 9, 2003


ANAND
VALLEJO
03/03/2003

Linares
February 22 – March 9, 2003

Photo Manuel Fenollar


"CIUDAD DE LINARES"
RADJABOV
KASPAROV
RADJABOV
03/03/2003

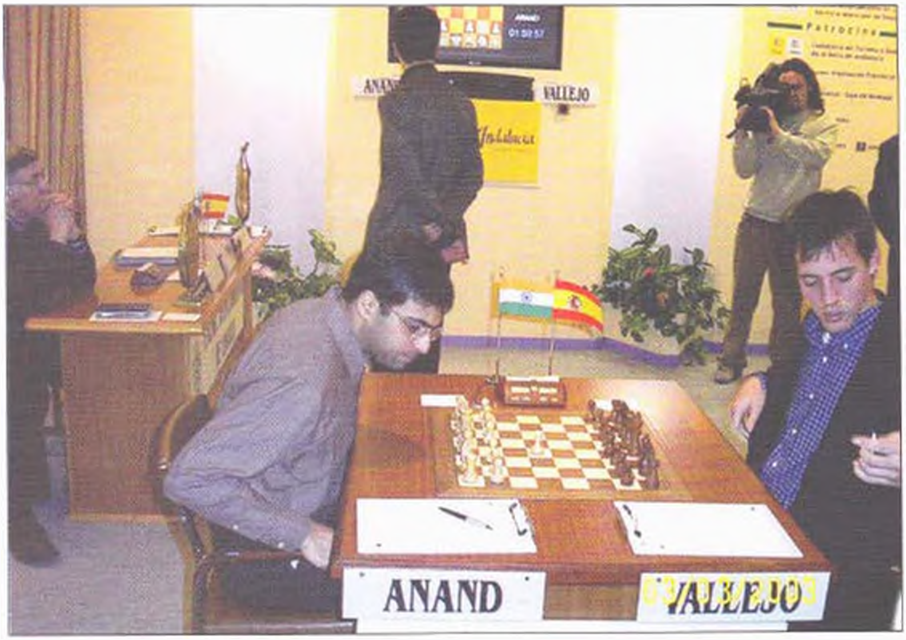
The young star Radjabov defeated Kasparov

Photo Manuel Fenollar

Linares
February 22 – March 9, 2003

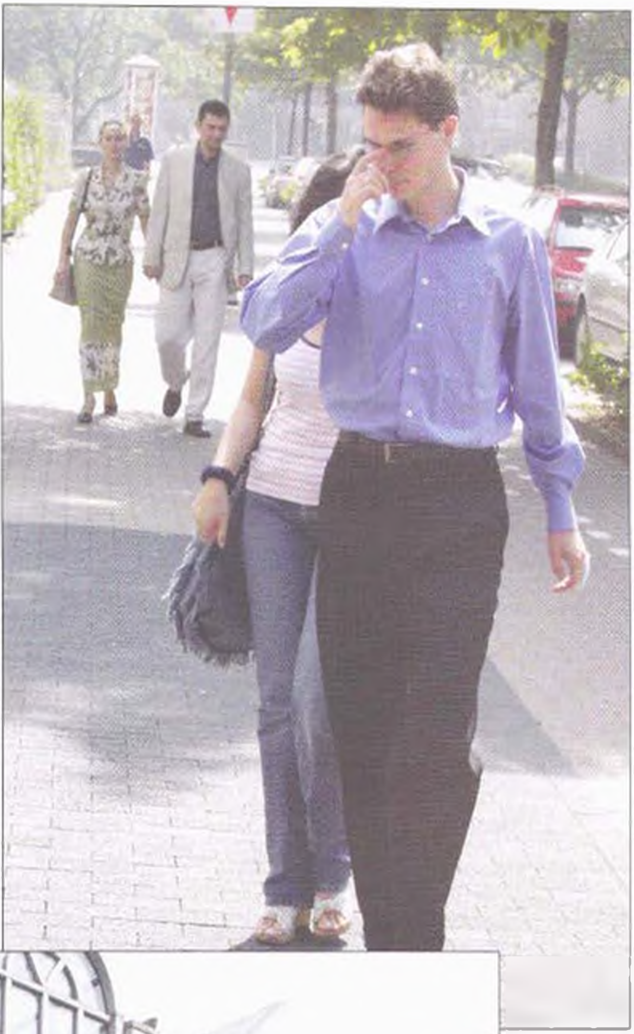
Linares, February 22 – March 9, 2003

Photo Manuel Fenollar


VALLEJO
ANAND
VALLEJO

Sparkassen
Chess-Meeting
Dortmund
July 31 – August 10, 2003

Heading for the playing hall: Leko and Bologan with their wives



This year the arena of the battles was the Stadt Theatre

SCHAUSPIEL
DORTMUND
SPARKASSEN
CHESS-MEETING 2003
SSEN
TING 2003

photo E. Atarov

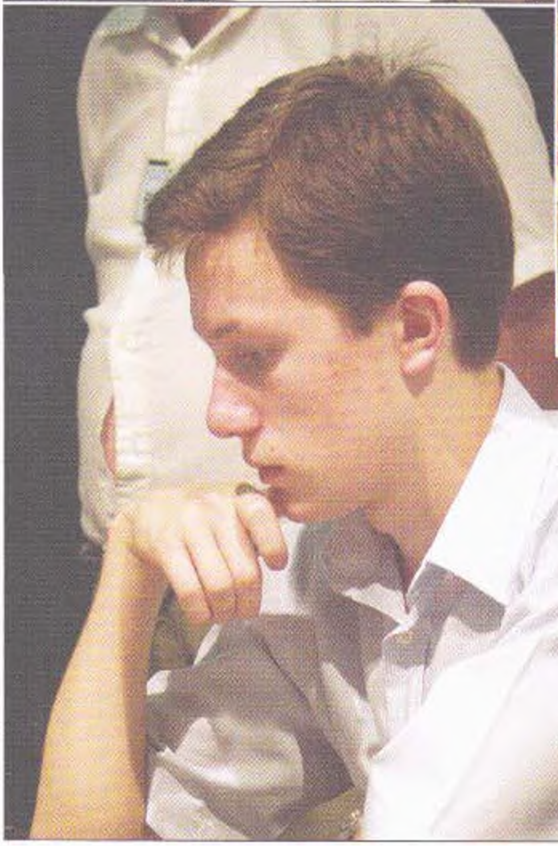
Sparkassen Chess-Meeting Dortmund

July 31 – August 10, 2003

In the press centre:
Anand with his wife Aruna

photos by E. Atarov

One of the favourites:
Peter Leko



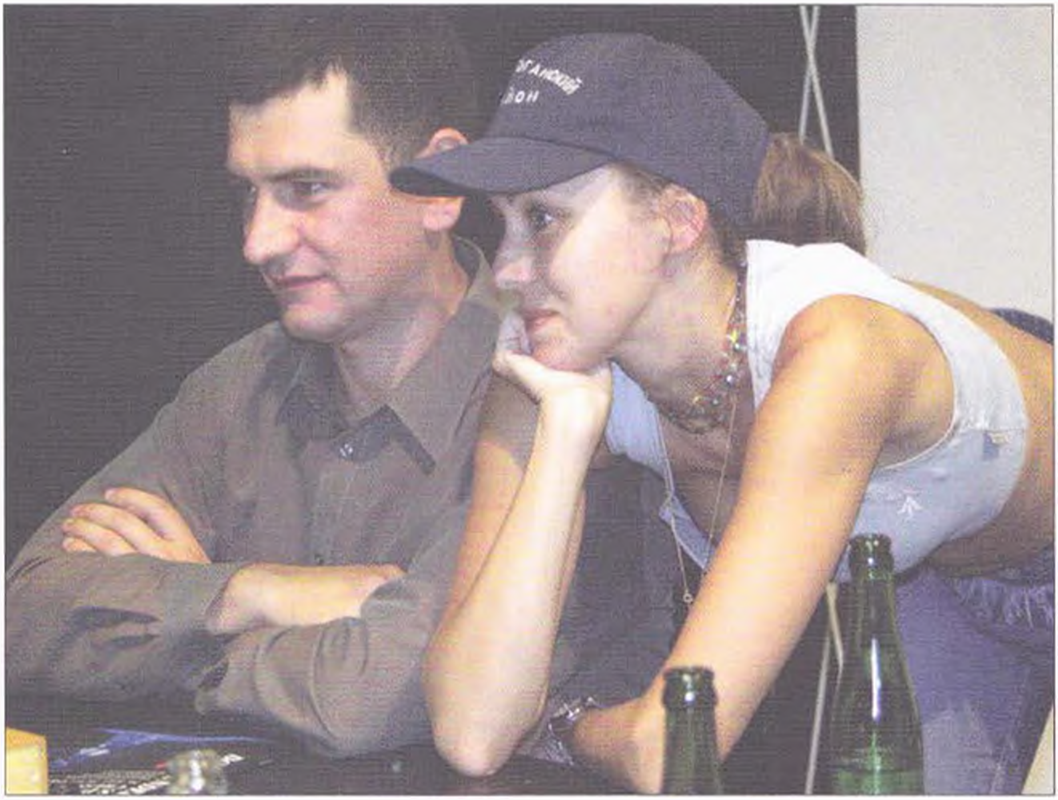
The big hope:
Naiditsch

SPARKASSEN
CHESS-MEETING

On the stage: in the heat of the fight

Sparkassen Chess-Meeting Dortmund July 31 – August 10, 2003

Bologan: My wife Margarita gave me just superb psychological support



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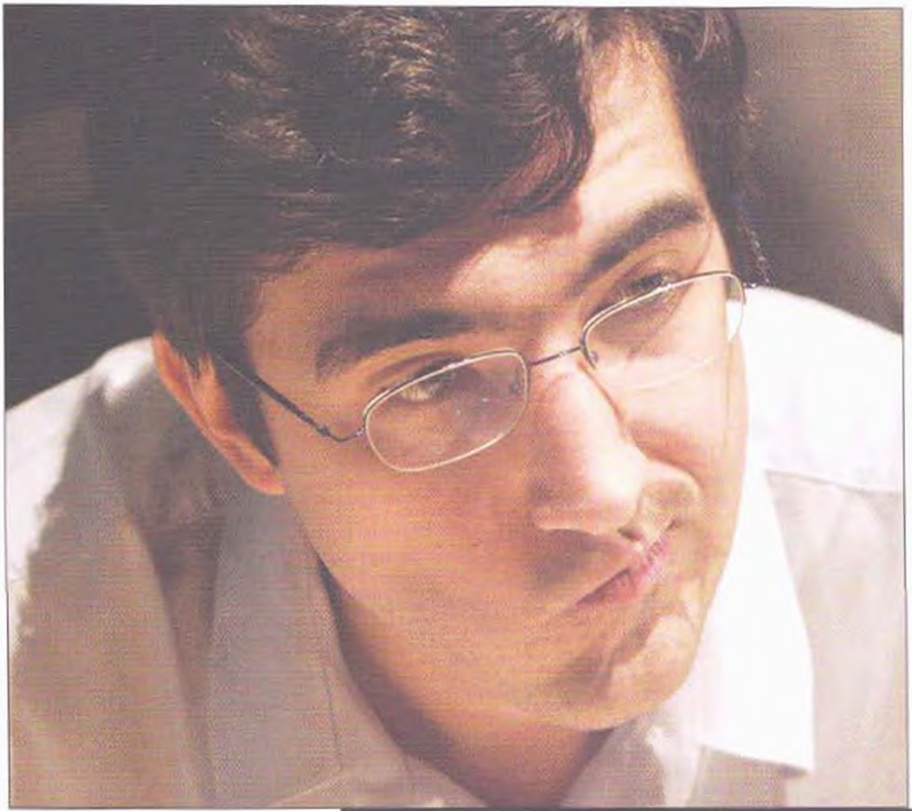
Leko vs Kramnik

Sparkassen Chess-Meeting Dortmund July 31 - August 10, 2003

Portraits: Teimour Radjabov

photo E. Atarov



Portraits: Kramnik

Sparkassen
Chess-Meeting
Dortmund
July 31 – August 10,
2003

Portraits: Leko

photo E. Atarov

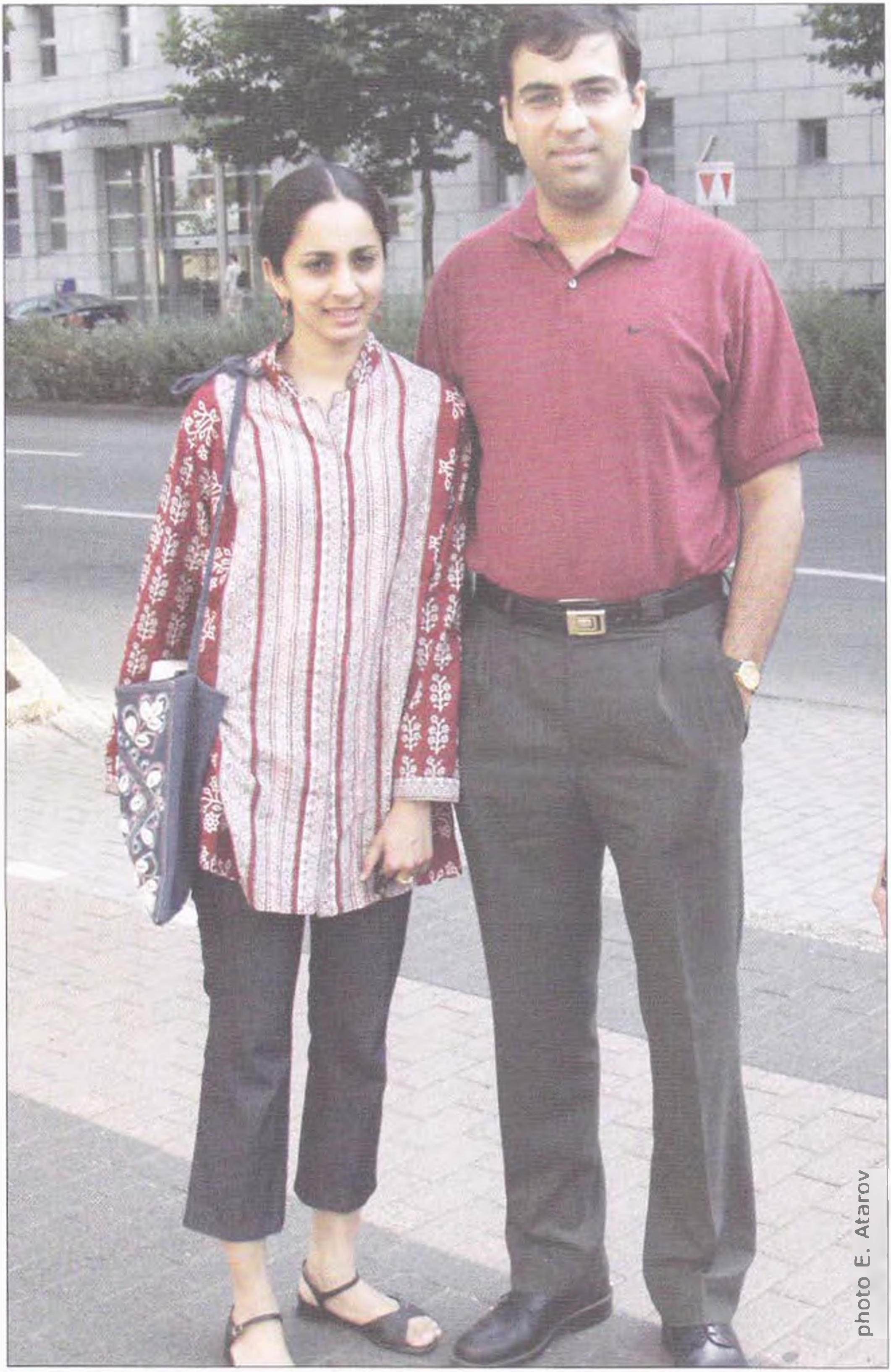


photo E. Atarov

Sparkassen Chess-Meeting Dortmund July 31 – August 10, 2003
Aruna accompanies his husband Anand in his tours all over the world

Sparkassen
Chess-Meeting
Dortmund
July 31 – August 10,
2003

DORTMUNDER SPARKASSEN
SPARK
CHESS-M

And the winner is...
VIOREL BOLOGAN!
A real surprise for the bookmakers.

photo E. Atarov

Ivan Sokolov played host
photo Cathy Rogers

World junior champion
Levon Aronian
photo Cathy Rogers

Linares – 2003

22.02 – 9.03, 20 cat.

			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
1	Leko	2736		= =	0 1	= =	= =	1 0	1 1	7
2	Kramnik	2807	= =		= =	= =	1 =	= =	1 =	7
3	Anand	2753	1 0	= =		0 =	1 =	= =	= 1	6.5
4	Kasparov	2847	= =	= =	1 =		1 =	= =	0 =	6.5
5	Ponomariov	2734	= =	0 =	0 =	0 =		1 1	= =	5.5
6	Vallejo Pons	2629	0 1	= =	= =	= =	0 0		= =	5
7	Radjabov	2624	0 0	0 =	= 0	1 =	==	= =		4.5

According to the mayor of Linares Juan Fernandez Gutierrez: "This tournament started as a private initiative of Mr. Luis Rentero Suarez and the initial Linares tournaments were sponsored entirely by him. Later he asked the municipality and the province for help and he was amply aided by other sponsors too. Chess now is the spoiled child of Linares and everybody here looks after it. It is now our pride and the Linares tournament is our landmark... The whole world knows of our modest city, with only 63 thousand inhabitants that organizes a competition which is quite deservedly considered to be the strongest in the world. Our task is to uphold the reputation of the tournament and its prestige at the highest level...Its organization costs us 400,000 Euro and the municipality usually pays half of it and the rest is contributed by the government of Andalusia and some firms and companies. It is not easy to find sponsors, but we understand that it is worth the effort because it advertises our place all over the world!"

The four participants of the unification world-championship were playing in the 20th edition of the Linares tournament. The FIDE world-champion Ruslan Ponomariov, the world-champion in classical chess Vladimir Kramnik and the two official challengers – the world's number 1 ranked player Garry Kasparov and Peter Leko were all there. The rest of the field consisted of the world's number 3 player Vishy Anand, the Spanish competitor Francisco Vallejo-Pons and the 15 year old player from Baku – Teimour Radjabov.

Leko and Anand won their first round games, while the second round witnessed the main sensation of the whole tournament – Radjabov beat Kasparov with Black. All games ended in a draw in rounds 3 and 4. Leko became the sole leader after round 5, while Kasparov finally came up to 50 %. Leko was then defeated by Anand and lost the lead. Later Anand in his stead lost to Kasparov in round 7 and surrendered the leading position too. In the end Kramnik won the first half of the tournament with 4 out of 6, followed closely at half a point back by Anand, Kasparov and Leko. Kramnik drew the rest of his games in the tournament and Anand caught up with him after round 12. They both had 6 out of 10 and Kasparov and Leko were just half a point behind. Leko beat Anand at the end in the decisive game of the tournament and just snatched the trophy away from Kramnik.

It looks like the times when Kasparov used to amass an unbelievable number of points and came ahead of everybody by a wide margin are long past and gone. This time all the main favourites had 6.5-7 points out of 12 games. The usually tentative Leko turned out to be the greatest fighter this time and scored 7 points with 4 wins and 2 losses, while Kramnik had the same result but with only two wins, drawing the rest of his games. Leko was proclaimed the winner at the end and he confirmed his transformation into "a new Leko" that we had already seen in Dortmund in 2002. Nobody can consider him to be a passive player anymore no matter what happens. His chances in a match against Kramnik seem to be about equal if you take into account the dynamics of their results. Vladimir managed to prove once again that he remains a ruthless, unbeatable player who avoids risks and makes fewer mistakes than everybody else.

Anand finished with 6.5 points and had excellent chances to score more but he was a bit unlucky.

Kasparov also ended at 6.5 points and despite the expectations of the optimists, he failed to adjust easily to the human type of playing after his wars against computers and so came his disaster in round 2. Nevertheless he managed to show his usual powerful play just like all of the top four players. He did his best to exert tremendous pressure against Anand's position in the last round but he failed to win that game and so the seemingly endless series of tournament wins of world-champion number 13 finally came to a close.

Ponomariov finished with 5.5 points after starting simply disastrously with only 1 out of 5 and he just managed to come in front of two other players thanks to his pair of wins against Vallejo. The last two places were occupied by the two weakest players in the tournament – Radjabov with 4.5 points and Vallejo with 5.

The results of the tournament show once again that the strongest chess players in the world are Kasparov, Kramnik and Anand (or Anand, Kramnik and Kasparov – make your choice of their order) and Peter Leko keeps trying to enlarge that magnificent trio into a quartet. In fact it is a great pity that FIDE's decisions compelled Anand to remain outside of the so-called unification world-championship.

Peter LEKO: "I will have to follow the steps of the champion"

A.Roshal's interview with Peter Leko ("64" #3, 2003)

Q: You won the challengers tournament in Dortmund and this was a great success too – which result do you appreciate more?

A: The players who participated in Dortmund were quite different from these in Linares. My satisfaction is just multiplied because of that. I can offer to you an interesting fact to think about as a comparison. I have played in Linares three times up to now and I had only won one single game (Ivanchuk lost on time, by the way...) and this time I won four games altogether!

Q: You have six non-drawn games out of 12 and that is quite a rare result for the winner of a super-tournament. It looks like it is more important, in order to play matches at the top-level, to make the same"+2" without losing a game, as unbeatable Kramnik did against aggressive Kasparov.

A: Well, what can I say? If you compensate every loss with a win all along and if you manage to win a couple of extra points here and there, so you would achieve the desired result somehow.

Q: All this seems to be an intriguing transformation for a person who was often criticized, right after his first chess steps, for being excessively peaceful and who was associated with prudence, feebleness and even timidity of character. Now it all turned around and you seemed even to have some argument with Kasparov...

A: This was just an outburst of emotions after a dramatic battle. I had the advantage at some moment in that game and later I was on the brink of losing for a long time. Kasparov was understandably quite disappointed to have missed the win and he was angry when I asked how many times he intended to repeat the position! I thought I was addressing the arbiters while Garry obviously thought it was for him. It all luckily ended well. In general, I have very good relationships with my colleagues who all love chess very much just like me. Garry's love for chess is also renowned so we have not had any unresolved problems yet.

As for character, it is really influenced, just like physical condition, by sportive exercises – soccer, tennis...I also attend a fitness-club back home in Szeged, where I have my home together with my wife and where her parents have a flat too.

Q: Peter, who else helps you in your chess preparation?

A: I believe you saw here Amador Rodriguez. The Cuban grandmaster lives in Spain permanently and he came to Linares from Barcelona.

Q: One could have speculated that he was there as a correspondent of the new "Peon de Rey" chess-newspaper. It is amazing that Miguel Illescas is its editor, since he is Kramnik's second and you also have the same manager as Kramnik – Karsten Henzel. This is quite rare nowadays because of the intensive rivalry between players. Perhaps this is the reason that you agreed so easily to forfeit the right to a tie-break in case of a tied score in your forthcoming match against Kramnik (Ponomariov would not retain his FIDE world-title in case of a drawn

match against Kasparov)?

A: Oh, not at all. I agree completely with the principle that the title-holder should defend his title under the same conditions in which he acquired it. Kramnik needed to beat Kasparov in order to become world-champion. I will have to follow his steps now otherwise I would not prove I am the best. Meanwhile I have never lost a game against Kramnik in classical chess and I have won two games...

Q: What then?

A: In case you are talking about the unification process, it depends not only on me. The conditions and the rules must be renegotiated and will become a part of the future contracts. I am planning to play soon after Monaco in a round-robin in Budapest with a classical time-control. There will be five Hungarian players, including Judit Polgar and Almasi, and as many foreigners.

Q: Maybe you will play in Dortmund then and later in another super-tournament...If you manage to beat Kramnik, when do you plan to prepare especially for the unification match?

A: It is still quite unclear when that match will eventually be played, so it is premature to even talk about that unification match yet. Everything will come with time and I need to play, so I do not plan to refrain from participating in these interesting tournaments at all.

Vladimir KRAMNIK: "I like to see new faces around"

A.Roshal's interview with Vladimir Kramnik ("64" #3, 2003)

Q: Chess games at the top level with the so-called classical time-control tend to produce too many draws, for example Kasparov's matches in London and Moscow and now the Linares tournament. Is not this tendency too dangerous for chess?

A: There is nothing to fear really. The game remains intense and interesting...Sometimes the tension is reduced naturally. It came quite logically in my game against Anand; Kasparov was forced to give a perpetual in his games with Leko and me...There are numerous examples. It often happens like that and I do no think that classical chess should be threatened by this tendency.

Q: I was a witness myself that the fight was very tense in practically all the games in Linares. What about the statistics?

A: It all depends on the tournament. Everyone wants to win an event of this caliber. It is really important in terms of reputation. The way you play in Linares will affect your chess life throughout the whole year. The fight for first place was very intense indeed. Everybody was strained and we all tried to avoid unnecessary risks. The defensive technique was excellent and the opening preparation was profound. I tried to experiment a bit in Wijk aan Zee, while here it was like in a bicycle-race. The competitors were pressing the pedals constantly and watching each other carefully. In case someone tried to race forward the others followed immediately. There were two players who were a bit weaker, but not by much. I like Vallejo a lot by the way: he sees everything, calculates everything and plays very solidly. He has some weak points too – his opening preparation is still weak, just like Radjabov's who is just extremely talented. It was not at all easy to beat these guys. They were trying for more than just to win recognition...

Q: Which of your games are you going to single out?

A: The game that I played against Kasparov with Black was very interesting and quite hard-fought. I played the game against Ponomariov without mistakes and there was an amusing tactical point there. And the game against Radjabov was attractive. I failed to press him really hard with Black, and I did the same against Ponomariov with White. I could have created a lot more problems for Leko in our decisive game in the last round too.

We tied for first place: Peter had four wins and I had no defeats. The tie-breaks would have been in my favour at any other place except Linares. Take into account additionally that Leko's games were often full of ups and downs, while I did not encounter serious chess problems in any of my games. It all came down to the proper realization of advantages. I was also physically sick for a while. I am not just trying to look for excuses...I was feeling unwell right at the start of the tournament and I played most of my games with a high body temperature. It was not so easy and I think I played some good games and I achieved a good result too under these circumstances. I might have been not quite happy under normal conditions and I would have probably hoped for more. Anyway, interest in my forthcoming match should be even higher given the fact that my rival and I shared first place.

Q: I can tell by your smile that you are quite satisfied that the other "top-guns" (Kasparov and Ponomariov) lagged behind this time. Are you planning for the future by inviting Malakhov in addition to your long time second Miguel Illescas?

A: You already know that I like to see new faces around. This is a part of my style of work, so to say. I decided that he was an excellent option. Volodja Malakhov's personal qualities are very acceptable to me and in principle I am quite satisfied.

92 **C67**

Anand – Ponomariov

Round 1 22.02

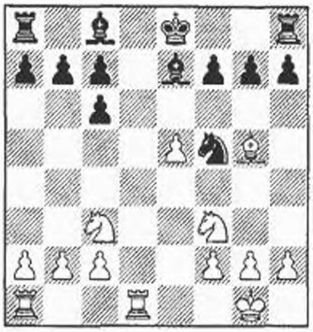
Notes by S. Shipov

Vishy beat the young champion with a patient technical style. He obtained a little better endgame, improved his position gradually and exploited every almost unnoticeable minute imprecision of his opponent. Black had no chances to seize the initiative and he failed to sharpen the play throughout the whole game. Anand's manoeuvring with his knights is capable of deserving admiration by every connoisseur!

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 ♘f6

All world champions must play the Berlin Defence! This is presently one of the most popular ways to defend with Black against the really strong players in answer to 1.e4. It is usually extremely difficult to break trough Black's lines! We are going to deal now with an exceptional rare case in which White managed to do that indeed...

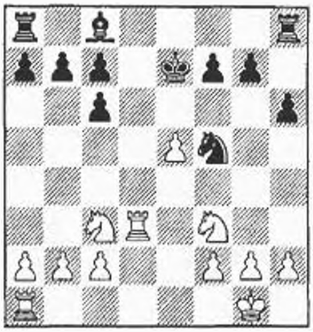
4.0–0 ♘xe4 5.d4 ♘d6 6.♗xc6 dxc6 7.dxe5 ♘f5 8.♕xd8+ ♔xd8 9.♘c3 ♗e7 10.♖d1+ ♔e8 11.♗g5



This exchange guarantees White a complete safety because his opponent will not have a bishop pair anymore. On the other hand the black king can thus abandon the 8th rank and enable the coordination of the rooks. So, the couple of bishops disappear to a mutual satisfaction...

11...♗xg5 12.♘xg5 ♔e7 13.♖d3 h6 14.♘f3

This is a novelty. I mentioned during the match Kasparov – Kramnik that the e4-square was not perfect for the knight in the Berlin pawn structure. In the recent game Grischuk – Ponomariov, Wijk aan Zee 2003, White played 14.♘ge4 ♖d8 15.♖xd8 ♔xd8 16.♖d1+ ♔e7 17.f4?! ♘e3 18.♖d2 ♗f5 19.♘g3 ♗h7 20.♔f2 ♘g4+ 21.♔g1 ♘e3 22.♔f2 but Black obtained at least equality. Ruslan decided to fight on – 22...♘c4 23.♖d4 b5 24.b3 ♘a3 25.♘ce4 ♘xc2 26.♖d2 ♗xe4 27.♘xe4 ♘b4 – and he won a pawn, but could not cope with the tremendous activity of White's pieces and the game ended in a draw.



14...g6

Black vacates the g7-square with the idea to regroup his pieces. We only need to understand why he did not play – 14...g5!? with the same idea, gaining some space in the process. The riddle is solved easily – 15.♖ad1 ♘g7 16.♘d4 and the black knight cannot go to e6, because of the check on f5.

15.♖ad1 ♘g7 16.h3 ♗e6 17.♘d4 ♖ad8 18.f4 ♗c4 19.♖3d2 c5 20.♘f3 ♘h5 21.b3 ♖xd2 22.♖xd2 ♗e6

22...♗a6? 23.♘d5+.

23.♘e2 c4

Black manages to get rid of his doubled pawn and the equality comes closer. It was also interesting for him to play 23...a5 with the idea to try to open the a-file.

24.♔f2

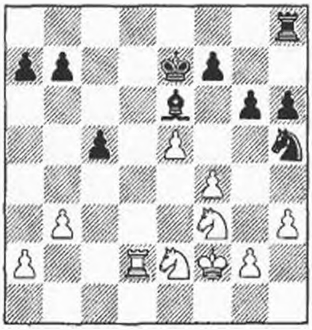
White fails to block the queenside – 24.b4 a5 25.b5 c3! – and Black gets an excellent counterplay. He captures either the a2-pawn, or the f4-pawn.

24...cxb3 25.cxb3

Black's pawn-majority on the queenside now is capable of producing a passed pawn at some moment.

25...c5

This was a very important decision. Black controls now the d4-square, but weakens the d5 and d6-squares. I would prefer to play 25...a5 with the idea to push a5-a4 at an opportune moment.



26.g4!

The black knight is sent into an exile.

26...♘g7 27.♘c3

The white knight instead is headed for a glorious height!

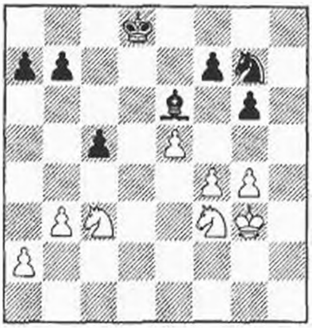
27...h5

It had some idea for Black to play 27...♖d8 immediately.

28.♔g3 hxg4 29.hxg4 ♖d8

The combination of the pawn-break h7-h5 with the trade of the rooks was totally out of question for Black, since the g5-square had been weakened. In principle it is usually a wrong idea to play actively on the side that your opponent has a pawn-majority. It was more logical for Black to try 29...♖h1!?.

30.♖xd8 ♔xd8



White is clearly better now. He can organize easily the f4-f5 pawn-break and the black knight on g7 is a sorry sight. On the other hand one should not forget that Black can also create a passed pawn on the queenside and his bishop is very powerful on both sides of the board.

31.♘g5

This is a good square for manoeuvring.

31...♔e7 32.♘ge4 b6 33.♔h4!

The white king will also use the g5-square for penetration!

33...♗d7

Black frees the e6-square for his miserable knight.

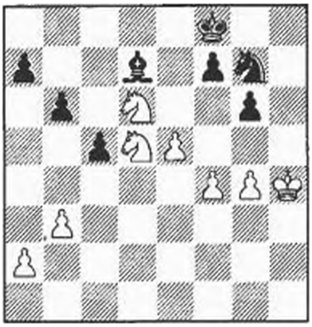
34.♘d5+

The black king now is repelled from the centre.

34...♔f8

After 34...♔e6 35.♘df6 ♗c6 36.♘d6 the position is a bit funny – both Black's king and knight are trapped and White can play ♔h4-g5-h6.

35.♘d6



35...♘e8?!

This is too passive and quite illogical too! Black had better chances to save the game with 35...♘e6, for example 36.f5 gxf5 37.gxf5 ♗c6 (After 37...♘d4 38.♔g5 ♔g7 39.♘f6! White is threatening a check on h5 followed by ♔g5-f6.) 38.♘e3! ♘d4 39.♔g5 ♔g7 40.♘c8 ♗d7 41.♘xa7 b5 and Black has some counterplay.

36.♘c4 b5

It was difficult to refrain from that move, but Black had to! He is only creating additional weaknesses. In case of 36...♗c6 White has 37.♘ce3!.

37.♘ce3 ♘g7

This miserable knight still cannot enter the action as it should. It missed its chance, though...

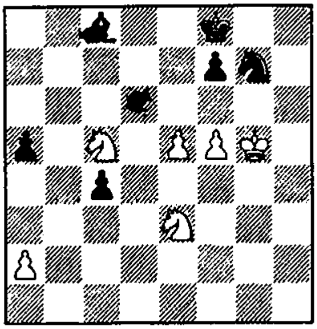
38.♔g5 ♗c6 39.♘c7 a5

This is a psychic attack only, but Anand proved to be immune to it!

40.f5! gxf5 41.gxf5 ♗d7

Or 41...♘e8 42.♘xe8 ♔xe8 43.♔f6 ♗f3 44.e6! fxe6 45.fxe6 and Black is again beyond salvation.

42.♘a6! c4 43.bxc4 bxc4 44.♘c5 ♗c8 45.♘e4 ♗d7 46.♘c5 ♗c8



47.e6!

This is a very elegant way to continue with the attack.

47...c3

Or 47...fxe6 48.f6 and after the retreat of the black knight White plays ♘e3xc4 attacking the a5 pawn as well as with the positional threat to put the knight on e5 and promote the f6-pawn.

48.e7+ ♔e8

48...♔xe7 49.f6+ ♔f8 50.fxg7+ ♔xg7 51.♘e4+–.

49.f6 ♘e6+ 50.♘xe6 ♗xe6 51.♔f4 ♔d7

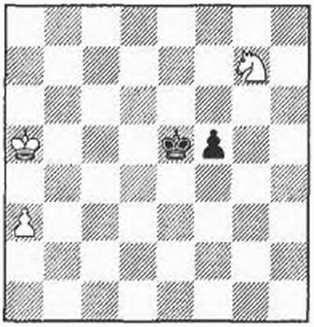
It is bad for Black to play 51...♗xa2 because of 52.♘f5! followed by a check on g7.

52.♔e5 ♗g4 53.♔d4 ♗d1 54.♔xc3

The rest is a matter of tradition. Ruslan always resists till the very last bullet.

54...♗a4 55.♔d4 ♔e6 56.♘d5 ♔f5 57.♔c5 ♔e5 58.a3 ♔e6 59.♘c7+ ♔xf6

60.e8♕ ♗xe8 61.♘xe8+ ♔e6 62.♔b5 ♔e5 63.♔xa5 f5 64.♘g7 1–0



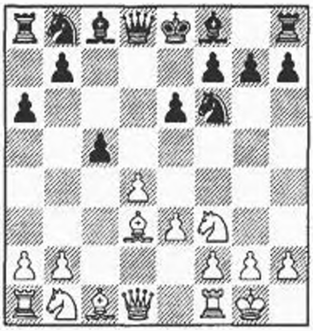
The white knight reaches the f1-square easily and Black cannot attack it perpetually so he resigned.

93 D27

Kramnik – Kasparov
Round 1 22.02

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.♘f3 e6 4.e3 a6 5.♗xc4 c5 6.0–0 ♘f6 7.♗d3

The retreat of the bishop to d3, together with the move 7.♗b3, is one of the most popular lines of the Queen Gambit Accepted.



7...♘bd7!?

This move is becoming fashionable lately. Black played more often before 7...♘c6 8.♘c3 cxd4 (in case of 8...♗e7, White can follow with 9.dxc5 ♗xc5 10.a3 0–0 11.b4±, and after 8...♕c7 9.a3 with the idea 10.dxc5) 9.exd4 ♗e7 (9...b5 10.a4! b4 11.♘e4±) 10.♗g5 0–0 11.♖c1∞ with a complicated game. White does not mind the appearance of an isolated pawn on d4 as a rule, because after 7...cxd4 8.exd4 he has the open c1-h6 diagonal for his dark-squared bishop. After 8...♗e7 9.♘e5!? (in case of 9.♘c3 Black can already play 9...b5, since after 10.a4 b4 11.♘e4 is not dangerous for him because of 11...♗b7=) 9...♘c6 10.♘xc6 bxc6 11.♗e3± and the tournament practice shows that White's chances are slightly preferable.

The same two players had a match during the Botvinnik Memorial and there they tested: 7...b6 8.dxc5 ♗xc5 9.a3 ♗b7 10.♕e2 0–0 11.♘bd2 ♘bd7 12.b4 ♗e7 13.♗b2 (with the idea to follow with e4-e5) 13...a5 14.bxa5 ♖xa5 15.♗b5 ♕b8 16.a4 ♖c8 (16...♖a7 17.♖fd1 ♗a8 18.♘c4 ♖c8 19.♘fe5± Baburin – Godena, Havana 1999) 17.♖fc1 ♖a7 18.♖xc8+ ♕xc8 19.♖c1 ♕a8, and here in the game Kramnik – Kasparov, Moscow (active, m/1) 2001, White could have obtained some edge with 20.♘c4! ♗d5 21.♘fe5± as it was recommended by Kasparov.

8.♖e1

White adds more venom to the threat e3-e4-e5. The move 8.♘c3, with the same idea is not so good due to 8...b5 9.a4 b4 10.♘e4 ♗b7 11.♘xf6+ ♘xf6= with an approximately equal position. In case of the prophylactic move 8.a4, Black can follow with 8...b6 9.♘c3 ♗b7 10.♕e2 ♕c7 11.♗d2 ♗d6∞

and he has no problems whatsoever.

8...b6

The move 8...b5 seems to be premature in the absence of a white knight on c3. After 9.a4! bxa4 (9...b4 10.e4 cxd4 11.e5 ♘d5 12.♘xd4 ♕c7 13.♗g5 ♘c5 14.♗f1↑ Lautier – Markowski, Rethymnon 2003) 10.e4 cxd4 11.e5 ♘d5 12.♖xa4 ♗b4 13.♗d2 ♗xd2 14.♘bxd2 ♘c5 15.♖xd4 ♘xd3 16.♖xd3 0–0 17.♘c4 a5 (17...♗d7 18.♖a3 ♕c7 19.♘d6± Zhukova – Danielian, Plovdiv 2003) 18.♖a3 ♗a6 19.♘d6! (this is stronger than 19.♘xa5 ♘b4 20.♕xd8 ♖fxd8 21.♖b3 ♖db8 22.♖c1±, Shariyazdanov – Rublevsky, Ekaterinburg 2002) 19...♖b8 20.♕d2 ♖b4 21.♘g5 h6 22.♘ge4± White won with a direct kingside attack in the game Avrukh – Rublevsky, Rethymnon 2003.

9.e4 cxd4 10.e5 ♘d5 11.♘xd4

After 11.♗g5 ♗e7 12.♗xe7 ♕xe7 13.♘bd2 ♗b7 14.♘c4 0–0 15.♘xd4 ♘f4 16.♗e4 ♘c5 17.♗xb7 ♕xb7 18.♕f3 ♕xf3 19.♘xf3 b5∓ Black was even slightly better in the game Grigore – Lazarev, Italy 1999.

11...♘c5

The careless move 11...♗b7? allowed White after 12.♘xe6! 12...fxe6 13.♕h5+ ♔e7 14.♗g5+ ♘7f6 15.exf6+ gxf6 16.♗f5 ♗c8 17.♘c3+– to organize a decisive attack against the black king in the game Gonzalez Garcia – Lehmann, Budapest 1997.

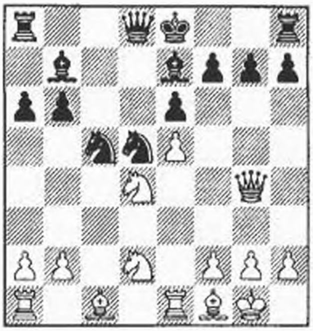
12.♗f1 ♗b7 13.♘d2

In case of 13.a3 Black can follow with 13...g6 (13...♕c7 14.b4 ♘d7 15.♗b2 ♖c8 16.♘d2 b5 17.♘e4 ♕b6 18.♘b3 ♗e7 19.♗d4± Barsov – Cifuentes Parada, Netherlands 1997; 13...♗e7 14.b4 ♘d7 15.♕g4 g6 16.♗h6± Rashkovsky – An. Nikitin, Tula 1999) 14.♘d2 b5 15.♘2f3 ♗g7 16.b4 ♘c3 17.♕c2 ♘5a4 18.♗g5 ♕d7 19.♖ac1 0–0 20.♕d3 ♖ac8∞ and the position was with mutual chances in the game Zimmerman – Fancsy, Hungary 1998.

13...♗e7

In response to 13...b5 Black should worry mostly about the move 14.a4. Meanwhile after 14...bxa4 15.♘c4 ♘b6 16.♘xb6 (in case of 16.♘d6+ ♗xd6 17.exd6 ♕xd6 18.♘xe6 ♕xd1 19.♘c7+ ♔d7 20.♖xd1+ ♔xc7 21.♗f4+ ♔c8 22.♖ac1 ♘bd7 23.♗d6 ♗c6∞ White's attack reaches a dead end) 16...♕xb6 17.♖xa4 ♗e7 18.♖a3 ♖d8= according to Kasparov the chances are equal. It is possible that in answer to 13...b5 Kramnik would have preferred the simple 14.♘2b3!? in order to bring his queen to g4 after Black places his bishop on e7.

14.♕g4



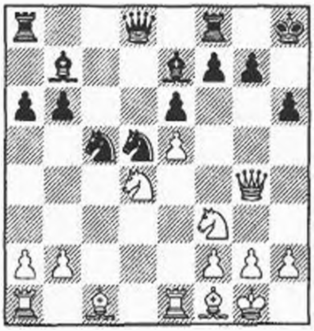
14...0–0

Black has played only 14...g6 before. White can follow that with 15.♘c4 (after 15.♘2f3, as it was played in the game Filippov – Donchenko, Smolensk 1997, Black must consider 15...h5!?∞) 15...h5 16.♕h3 (after 16.♕g3 h4 17.♕g4 h3 18.g3 b5∞ Black has nothing to fear, because of the weakness of the a8-h1 diagonal, which is leading directly into the den of the white king) 16...b5 (16...0–0 17.♗h6 ♖e8 18.♖ad1 b5 19.♘d6 ♗xd6 20.exd6 ♕xd6 21.♘f3↑) 17.♘d6+ ♗xd6 18.exd6 ♕xd6 19.b4! ♘xb4 20.♕c3 ♘d5 21.♘xb5 ♘xc3 22.♘xd6+ ♔e7 23.♘xb7 ♘xb7=∞ and here according to Kasparov, White has an excellent compensation for the pawn due to his wonderful pair of long range bishops.

15.♘2f3 ♔h8 16.♘g5

White is trying to weaken the shelter of the black king. In case of 16.♕h5 he had the response 16...♘b4!?∞ to think about.

16...h6 17.♘gf3



17...a5!

Black intends to trade the light-squared bishops in the nearest future. Kasparov did not like the move 17...b5, because of 18.♕h5 ♔h7 19.♘b3, followed by 20.♘xc5 and 21.♗d3+, and in case of 17...f5 18.exf6 ♗xf6± the black pawn on e6 would be really vulnerable.

18.♕h5 ½ – ½

Black is not worse at all in the final position. After 18...♔h7∞ he has a straightforward plan to exchange the light-squared bishops.

94 **E12**

Radjabov – Leko

Round 1 22.02

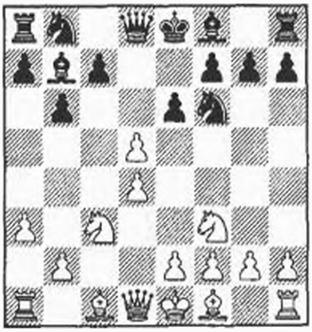
Notes by A. Bezgodov

There was a time when the Queen's Indian Defence was considered a bleak opening which had strong tendency to dull draws. Nowadays there are no boring openings! White players are striving for victory, constantly inventing new puzzles for solving to the opponets. Well, for the present game against Leko Teimour Radjabov has prepared a mind-boggling novelty.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 b6 4.♘c3 ♗b7 5.a3

Formerly the utility of this move used to be questionable, but now this idea has gained popularity. White does not lose a tempo, as the black bishop won't be able to jump to the b4-square. The move is good in other respects too (for instance, it can be viewed as preparation for a possible b2-b4).

5...d5 6.cxd5



6...♘xd5

The capture by the knight is more dynamic than by the pawn as the b7-bishop retains its freedom in the centre and on the kingside. At the Bled

Olympiad in 2002 Radjabov lost to Ljubojevic in the variation 6...exd5 7.g3, but Leko realises that his opponent must have found good lines for White after that.

7.♕c2

Maybe this queen move was a surprise for Leko. In 2002 Radjabov outplayed Anatoly Karpov with the move 7.e3. The choice of the opening variation in every particular game is a special skill and only Radjabov himself can say what influenced his decision. Perhaps, he pinned big hopes on his upcoming novelty.

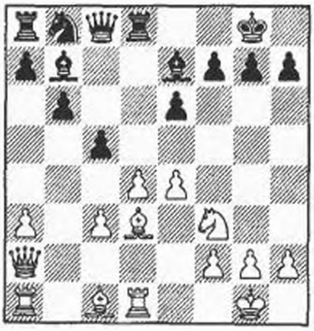
7...♘xc3 8.bxc3 ♗e7 9.e4 0–0 10.♗d3 c5 11.0–0 ♕c8

It may seem that Black was wrong to cede the centre, but that's not exactly true. The white queen feels uncomfortable on c2 (no matter how strange it may seem, on d1 it would be better) and it is not easy for White to benefit from the nice-looking centre. After the queen exchange White would have to leave behind all hopes for an advantage.

12.♕a2

But here the queen cannot be exchanged!

12...♖d8 13.♖d1

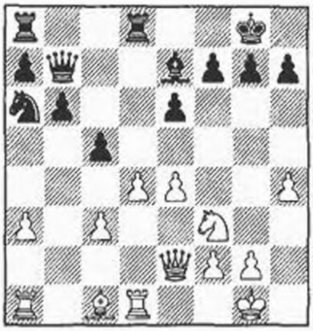


13...♗a6!

Well, Leko cannot exchange the queens yet, but that's OK. He is perfectly satisfied to exchange the light-squared bishops. When the d3-bishop, White's main attacking piece, leaves the board White's possible initiative in the centre and on the kingside will become less dangerous.

14.♗xa6 ♘xa6 15.♕e2 ♕b7 16.h4!N

This is Radjabov's novelty. It is very interesting and yields good chances for White. White ensures comfortable conditions for developing his attack on the kingside for which this pawn can be quite useful. In 1999 a talented Israeli player with a bright attacking style, Alik Gershon, in his game against a very experienced player, Mikhail Gurevich, preferred 16.♗f4 and gradually lost the game, as his attack stalled.



16...♘c7!

The knight should be transferred to the e8-square where it will come in handy for Black. This idea is hard to find at the board, but of course Leko was aware of this plan. Gurevich against Gershon had already defended his position in the same way.

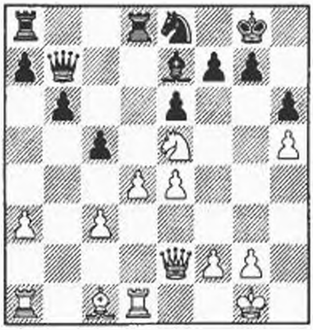
17.h5 h6

Leko does not want to let an enemy pawn onto the h6-square. And the point is not even that on h6 it would be more annoying for the black king. Instead Peter is not just trying to hold the position – he strives for chances to take over the initiative! With this move the pawn fixed on h5 might happen to become vulnerable. 17...♘e8!?

18.♘e5

Unfortunately for Black, the knight cannot be pushed away from here by a pawn because the key g6-square would be seriously weakened along with the whole king's fortress. This is a serious defect of Black's 17th move. On the other hand, is this knight so dangerous?

18...♘e8



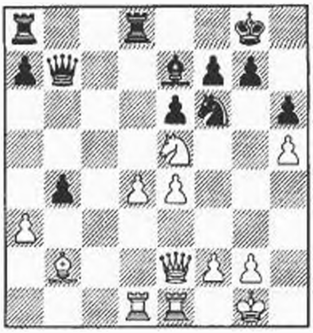
19.♗b2

The bishop looks very unconvincing here – what can it do on the entirely blocked diagonal? Was it Radjabov's mistake? No! He has a profoundly crafty plan – while the bishop guards the d4-pawn, the rooks occupy the e1 and d1-squares, and the bishop will return on c1 if necessary. There simply won't be other good ways for White to reorganize his position. For example: 19.♗f4 ♘f6! and three white pawns at once have their weaknesses exposed! 20.f3?! ♘xh5–+.

19...♘f6 20.♖e1 b5 21.♖ad1 cxd4!?

A dubious decision. Leko lets the half-locked white bishop increase its influence. On the other hand, he manages to create a passed pawn, which in the long run yields him a victory. The tension could have been kept up for some time more: 21...♖ac8 22.♖d3 a5 23.♘g4 ♖c7 24.♖g3 ♔h7∞.

22.cxd4 b4!



23.a4

A forced decision, although at this moment Radjabov was probably content with his position – the inevitable d4-d5 promises a lot of interesting attacking chances. 23.axb4? ♗xb4 24.♖f1 ♘xe4–+.

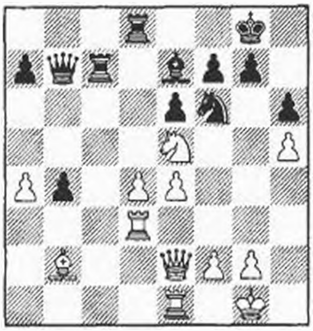
23...♖ac8 24.♖d3

Radjabov, playing for a win, prepares d4-d5 and improves the position of his rooks. Possible was an immediate break-through which leads to a quick draw: 24.d5 exd5 25.exd5 ♖xd5 (equal is 25...♘xd5 26.♘xf7 ♔xf7 27.♕e6+ ♔f8 28.♗xg7+ ♔xg7 29.♕g6+ ♔f8 30.♕xh6= also with a perpetual check) 26.♘g6 fxg6 27.♕e6+ ♔h8 28.♗xf6 ♖xd1 29.♗xg7+ ♔xg7 30.

♕xg6+ ♔f8 31.♕xh6+ ♔g8 32.♕g6= (32.♖xd1?! ♕e4–+).

24...♖c7

Black is ready to double his rooks along the c-file so the break-through in the centre cannot be postponed any longer.



25.d5!

White has to forget subtle manoeuvring and plunge into the precise calculation of the variations, which have dangers for both sides.

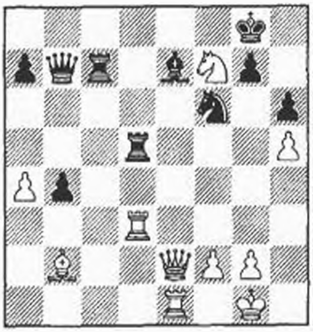
25...exd5

An obligatory exchange.

26.exd5 ♖xd5

Apparently, the strongest move. It is risky and unpleasant for the defending side to leave the pawn on the board. Without the pawn there is one less problem. I did not find any direct winning line for White after 26...♗f8 27.d6 (27.♘g4 ♘xg4 28.♕xg4 ♖c2) 27...♖xd6 (27...♗xd6? 28.♘g4! ♘xg4 29.♕xg4+–) 28.♖xd6 ♗xd6 29.♘g4 ♘xg4 30.♕xg4 ♗f8 31.♖e8 f5 32.♕xf5 ♖f7. But I can say for sure that the capture of the pawn by the knight would have lost quickly, elegantly and by force: 26...♘xd5? 27.♘xf7! ♔xf7 28.♕e6+ ♔f8 29.♗xg7+! Sacrificing the second piece! 29...♔xg7 30.♕g6+ ♔f8 31.♕xh6+ ♔e8 32.♕g6+ ♔d7 33.♕e6+ ♔e8 34.♖g3. That was in store for Peter Leko in case of the hasty capture of the d5-pawn by the knight! 34...♘f6 35.♕xf6 ♕d5 36.♖g7+–

27.♘xf7!



This is a spectacular and dangerous move; however it is not lethal for Black.

27...♖xd3

The only move! The knight was absolutely immune from capture: 27...♔xf7?? 28.♗xf6 ♖xd3 29.♕xd3 gxf6 30.♕g6+ ♔f8 31.♕xh6+ ♔e8 32.♕g6+ ♔d7 33.♕f5+ ♔e8 34.h6+–

28.♘xh6+

More cunning is 28.♕xd3 ♕d5! The main idea of Black's defence is to exchange queens even at the cost of a pawn. The passed pawn on b4 is a good guarantee that he will not lose the endgame. (28...♔xf7?? 29.♗xf6+– see the note to Black's 27th move) 29.♘xh6+ ♔f8, with the reversed-move order of the game continuation.

28...♔f8!

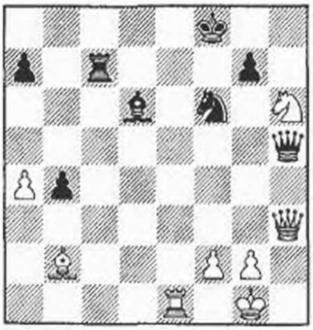
Why here? Closer to the centre – the endgame is not far off! Leko is not the kind of chess player who plays 28...gxh6?? 29.♕xd3+–

29.♕xd3 ♕d5! 30.♕g3

In case of the immediate exchange

30.♕xd5 ♘xd5 31.♘f5 ♗f6 32.♘d6 ♖e7!∓ (a repetition of moves is possible: 32...♗e7 33.♘f5 ♗f6=) – only Black is able to play for a win, and obviously this does not correspond to Radjabov's interests.

30...♗d6 31.♕h3 ♕xh5



Leko has regained the pawn and rebuffed the assault. It is clear that the endgame is in his favour. Radjabov was disappointed by the failure of his attack and now is incapable of showing any serious resistance to an inspired Leko.

32.♕xh5 ♘xh5 33.♘f5 ♗f4 34.♖e4 ♗d2 35.♘d4 ♔f7 36.♖e2?

It's a surprise that White does not involve his king in the struggle against the menacing b4-pawn! I think that after the elementary 36.♔f1 the game would have been drawn. Either way, that move should have been played.

36...♗c1!

This is a very unpleasant lunge and threatens ♘f4! Radjabov was perplexed and exhausted, and he quickly loses the game.

37.♘b5?

Even here more resistance could have been offered: 37.g3 ♘f6 38.♔f1 ♗xb2 39.♖xb2 ♖c4 40.♘b3 ♘d5 41.♔e2 with some drawing chances.

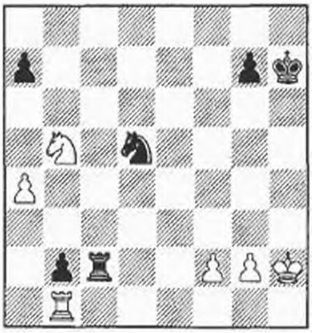
37...♘f4 38.♖e4 ♖c2 39.♘d6+ ♔g6 40.♗xc1 ♖xc1+ 41.♔h2 ♘d5 42.♘b5

Hopeless is 42.♖d4 b3 43.♖xd5 b2 44.♖b5 b1♕ 45.♖xb1 ♖xb1–+.

42...b3

Now the game is finished.

43.♖e6+ ♔h7 44.♖e2 ♖c2 45.♖e1 b2 46.♖b1



46...a6 0–1

The more experienced and (for now) stronger player, Peter Leko, has perfectly turned Radjabov's aggressive style against himself and won.

95 C11

Kasparov – Radjabov

Round 2 23.02

Notes by M. Notkin

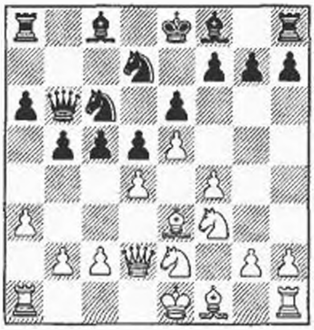
1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.e5 ♘fd7 5.f4 c5 6.♘f3 ♘c6 7.♗e3 a6 8.♕d2 b5 9.a3

Preventing b5-b4. In the early years of this line's exploration it had been considered that White couldn't contemplate dispassionately the mass of Black's queenside pawns so the majority of games saw the exchange 9.dxc5. One day people found out that the advance of the black pawns on the queenside may actually favour White. Indeed it's not so easy for Black to progress after b5-b4 and c5-c4 if White's king is not there, while White has a clear idea of preparing f4-f5 which works better with the centre closed. Therefore even the provocative 9.♗d3 c4 10.♗e2 b4 11.♘d1 has been played. Kasparov isn't afraid of c5-c4 at all but prefers to impede b5-b4.

9...♕b6

9...♗b7 10.♗d3 was played in a game of Kasparov's permanent assistant Yuri Dokhoian (Dokhoian – Vasiukov, Moscow 1990).

10.♘e2



10...c4

The original research is unveiled. This position hasn't been seen before.

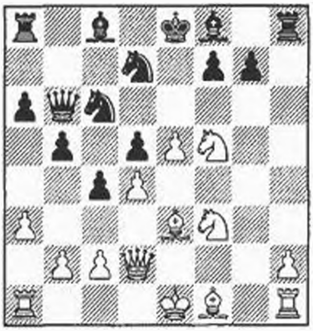
11.g4

White could play more carefully – 11.g3 then ♗g2, 0–0 and so on as Black is unable to achieve anything special on the queenside. The text move allows Radjabov to begin counterplay.

11...h5 12.gxh5 ♖xh5 13.♘g3 ♖h8 14.f5

As usual Kasparov acts straightforwardly.

14...exf5 15.♘xf5



15...♘f6!

This was the idea behind Black's previous move. With the help of this trick Radjabov gets good squares for his pieces. Nevertheless it's early to talk about equality.

16.♘g3

Both 16.exf6 ♗xf5 and 16.♘xg7+ ♗xg7 17.exf6 ♗xf6 are harmless.

16...♘g4 17.♗f4 ♗e6

After 17...b4 18.axb4 ♕xb4 19.c3 White retains the advantage due to the weak pawn on d5.

18.c3 ♗e7

If 18...♘a5 19.♖d1 ♘b3 20.♕c2 – b3 is scarcely a better place for the knight than c6.

19.♘g5

19.h3 ♘h6 looks natural but I suppose Kasparov saw the position after his 23rd move from here and regarded it as favourable for White.

19...0–0–0

The dark-squared bishop is good so Radjabov doesn't give it up.

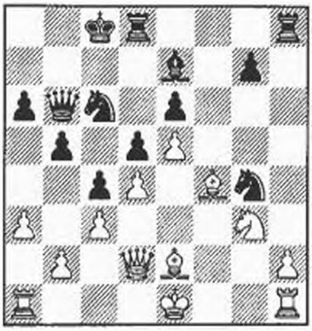
20.♘xe6 fxe6 21.♗e2!?

Just a few moves ago Radjabov would have played ♘h6 here. Now he finds more active way.

(diagram)

21...♘gxe5!?

After the capture on h2 the knight



wouldn't have found its way back home. But according to Kasparov 21...♘xh2!, however risky it looks, was in fact the best option. The likely continuation is 22.♘h5 (or 22.0–0–0 b4! 23.axb4 a5 with counterplay) 22...♘a5! 23.♖b1! (23.♖xh2? ♘b3 24.♕d1 ♖df8 25.♗g3 g6 26.♘f6 ♖xh2 27.♗xh2 ♕c7! with advantage to Black as 28.♘g4? is impossible due to 28...♗h4+; 23.♖d1 ♗h4+) 23...♘b3 24.♕e3 (24.♕c2? is met by the series of tactical blows – 24...♘xd4! 25.cxd4 ♗h4+ 26.♔d1 ♕xd4+ 27.♕d2 ♕e4! shooting at both white rooks; 26.♗g3 ♖xh5! 27.♕c3 ♘f3+! where Black is two pawns up.) 24...g6 25.♖xh2 (25.♘f6? ♘g4!) 25...gxh5 26.♗xh5 and White's position is only slightly better.

22.♕e3!

After 22.dxe5 d4; or 22.♗xe5!? ♘xe5 23.dxe5 ♗c5 a position arises in which Kasparov would have preferred to be Black. A long-term initiative for the piece is secured.

22...♘d7?

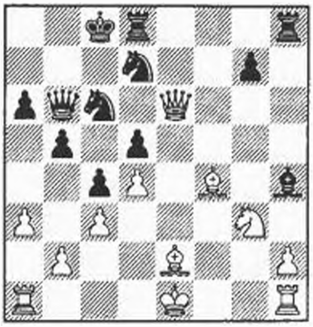
Correct was 22...♗d6! and if 23.dxe5 then again 23...♗c5 with compensation for the piece.

23.♕xe6 ♗h4

(diagram)

24.♕g4?

Something has confused Kasparov



in the line 24.♕xd5!?. Here's an example: 24...♖de8 25.0–0–0! ♗xg3 26.hxg3 ♖xh1 27.♖xh1 ♖xe2 28.♖h8+ ♘d8 29.♕a8+ ♘b8 30.♗xb8+–.

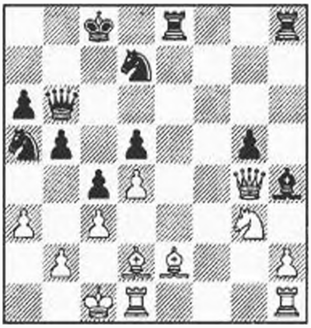
24...g5! 25.♗d2

25.♗xg5?! ♖dg8 and White loses the queen – 26.♕xh4 ♖xh4 27.♗xh4. Kasparov confessed he had overlooked this simple line.

25...♖de8

Annoying threats appear...

26.0–0–0 ♘a5



27.♖df1?

A fatal mistake. Essential was 27.♔b1 with an unclear position.

27...♘b3+ 28.♔d1 ♗xg3

Eliminating the knight which could go to f5 covering the dangerous diagonal.

29.♖f7

29.♕xg3 loses to 29...♕g6 30.♕xg5

♕b1+ 31.♗c1 ♖hg8 32.♕f4 ♖e4 33.♕h6 ♖g6!; if 29.hxg3 then 29...♕g6 30.♗c1 ♕b1 31.♕xg5 ♘xc1 32.♕xc1 ♕e4!–+ with a double attack on e2 and h1.

29...♖d8 30.♗xg5 ♕g6! 31.♕f5

31.♖f5 ♖de8–+.

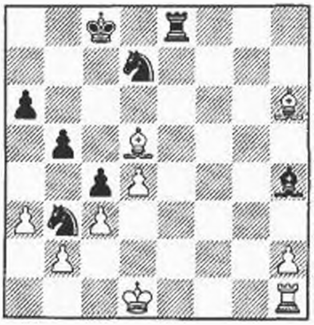
31...♕xf5 32.♖xf5 ♖df8 33.♖xf8+ ♘xf8 34.♗f3 ♗h4!

Stronger than 34...♖xh2 35.♖xh2 ♗xh2 36.♗xd5 and Black has a lot of technical problems.

35.♗e3

35.♗xh4 ♖xh4 36.♗xd5 ♘xd4!–+.

35...♘d7 36.♗xd5 ♖e8 37.♗h6



37...♘dc5!

Nicely realized!

38.♗f7 ♖e7 39.♗h5 ♘d3 0–1

Black has activated his pieces. Further resistance is senseless.

96 B31

Ponomariov – Kramnik

Round 2 23.02

Notes by S. Shipov

The first game between the champions was a month ago in Wijk aan Zee and the young Ukrainian won a sensational game then. The much more experienced champion had a quite convincing revenge in this game.

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5

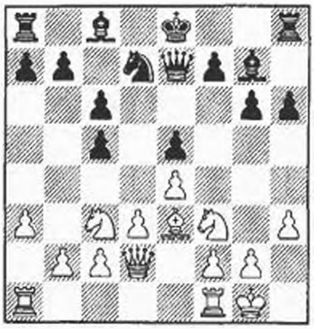
You can name this variation the “anti – Cheljabinsk” if you take into account the contemporary theoretical situation!

3...g6 4.♗xc6 dxc6 5.h3 ♗g7 6.d3 ♘f6 7.♘c3 ♘d7 8.♗e3 e5 9.♕d2 h6! 10.0–0 ♕e7

Black is not in a hurry to castle and that is really essential.

11.a3

This is the beginning of a standard plan that does not bring any success to White. The other routine plan starting with 11.♘h2 with f2-f4 to follow seemed more to the point.



11...♘f8!

This is an exemplary and instructive manoeuvre. Black deploys his knight to the best square for it in this pawn structure. That was one of the reasons that he preserved the f8-square free.

12.b4

White continues his attack against Black’s pawn chain on the queenside. Opening of files there would be very favourable for him, but...

12...♘e6!

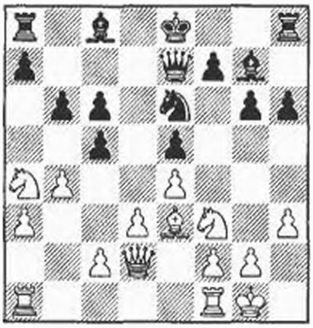
Vladimir ignores temporarily his

opponent's actions.

13.♘a4

White is persistent. After 13.bxc5, Black's attack in centre begins with 13...f5! and the white bishop on e3 is in trouble.

13...b6!



This is a remarkable way to hold the c5-outpost! Black provokes the appearance of a white pawn there! After b4xc5 Black will counter with b6-b5!, sending White's knight back. Later the pawn on c5 will be easily recaptured.

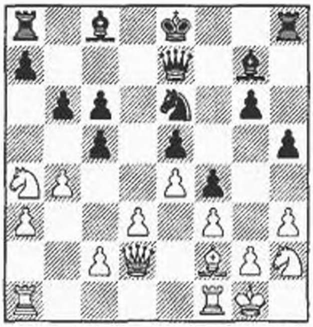
14.♘h2?

This novelty is quite dubious. The white knights were both placed at the edge of the board, away from the centre and Black did not fail to exploit that, of course. White should probably try to find an improvement in the line that has already been tested in practice: 14.bxc5 b5! 15.♘b2 f5 16.exf5 gxf5 17.♕c1, Kabanov – Starosek, Omsk 2001. Black has an excellent game, no doubt about that, but still he should not be so much better right after the opening!?

14...f5! 15.f3

What else could White do? His bishop was about to be trapped...

15...f4 16.♗f2 h5



Look now at the white knight on h2. What kind of a beast is that? It is some new and original species. It is doing nothing and it has absolutely no moves at all. White has a lot of problems already.

17.bxc5 b5 18.♘b2 g5

Well, the animal on h2 is maybe doing something after all. It stops Black's attack there a little bit...

19.d4?!

White is just panicking. The destruction of his pawn centre is not going to bring him any solace. It was much better to play 19.a4!

19...exd4 20.♘d3

One of the white knights is back in action, but White has paid a dear price for that...

20...♘xc5

An extra pawn might be useful after all...!

21.♘xc5 ♕xc5 22.♖fd1 ♗e6

Black's bishops are just excellent.

23.♕b4 ♕b6!

Black could have won the exchange after 23...♕xb4 24.axb4 d3 25.cxd3, but White would have the chance then to build something like a fortress.

24.a4

In case of 24.♗xd4 Black had the amusing tactical trick – 24...c5! 25.

♗xc5 a5, and White could answer that with a counter trick of his own 26.♕d4!, but it would only be good enough as an aesthetic achievement... In fact after 26...♗xd4+ 27.♗xd4 ♕c7 28.♗xh8 ♖d8, Black's advantage is quite evident.

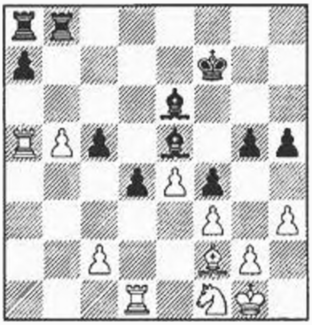
24...c5 25.♕xb5+ ♕xb5 26.axb5 ♔f7

Black is clearly better in this endgame.

27.♖a5 ♖hb8 28.♘f1

The unidentifiable beast is once again beginning to resemble a chess knight...

28...♗e5



29.♖da1

Ruslan understands that he has no chances in a patient slow positional play. He decides to complicate and attack instead and gets burned quickly...

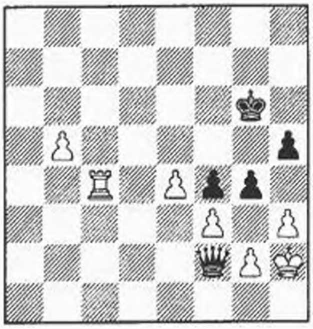
29...d3! 30.♖xa7+ ♔f6! 31.♖xa8 ♖xa8 32.♖xa8 dxc2

Black's c2-pawn turns out to be stronger than a rook.

33.♖f8+ ♔g6 34.♖e8 ♔f7 35.♖f8+ ♔g6! 36.♖e8 ♗c4!

This is the solution to the problem. The triumphant appearance of a new black queen is unavoidable.

37.♖xe5 c1♕ 38.♖xc5 ♕xf1+ 39.♔h2 ♕xf2 40.♖xc4 g4! 0–1



Black places a pawn on f3 and checkmates the white king, therefore Ponomariov resigned. What can you say? It is not possible to fare any worse in an opening line. Ruslan played two games with White in the "anti-Cheljabinsk" variation and lost both... Ruslan, change your openings and hold yourself together!

97 E15

Vallejo Pons – Anand

Round 2 23.02

Notes by S. Shipov

This was a very good game without any obvious mistake. The opponents evidently showed plenty of mutual respect and that prevented the bloodshed as they did not go to an extraordinary length to beat each other.

1.♘f3 ♘f6 2.c4 b6 3.d4 e6 4.g3 ♗a6 5.♕b3

This line of the Queen's Indian Defence is quickly becoming popular among plenty of strong players, including the young Spanish grandmaster.

5...♘c6

Black is threatening ♘c6-a5.

6.♘bd2

White is forced to place his pieces not quite favourably in order to defend hid c4-pawn. He will not be able now to develop his bishop on c1 easily and as a consequence the rook on a1 will suffer too. The other possibility to parry Black's threat was 6.♗d2, but Black would counter that with 6...♗b7! threatening the d4-pawn. White would have to play 7.♗c3 and after 7...♘e4 Black would enjoy an excellent position.

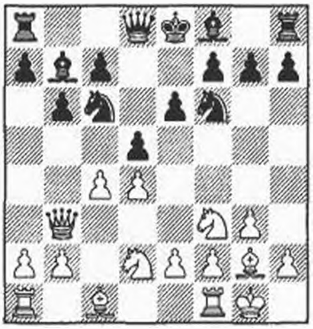
6...d5

Black prevents White from occupying the full centre with e2-e4. The drawback of the move 6...♗b4 is that in answer to a2-a3 Black will need to exchange his powerful bishop for White's knight.

7.♗g2 ♗b7

This retreat is not forced yet. The more principled move here is 7...♗d6 continuing with the development. White's pressure against the knight on c6 in not effective at all – 8.♕a4 ♗b7 9.♘e5 0–0! 10.♘xc6 ♕d7 and Black regains the knight. He can also start with the move 7...♕d7 and Vishy played like that, but only later in his quick-chess game against Ponomariov...

8.0–0



8...♗d6!

This novelty looks very sensible. Black takes the e5-square under control. White obtained a stable positional advantage in the game Vallejo Pons – Tkachiev, Biel 2002, after 8...♗e7 9.cxd5 exd5 (9...♕xd5 10.♕d1!) 10.♘e5! 0–0 11.♘xc6 ♗xc6 12.♘f3.

9.cxd5 exd5 10.♘b1!

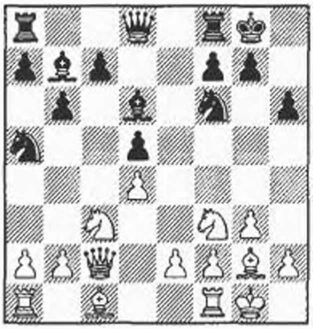
This is White's most effective way to solve the problems of the development, since there is no more suitable square for the queen-knight than the c3-square. It is amazing that both sides are using plenty of tempi to achieve the optimal placement of their pieces. This is what the expert grandmaster play is all about! Black's pieces are quite well developed at first sight and he only needs to castle, but his knight on c6 is obviously misplaced...

10...0–0 11.♘c3 ♘a5

White will counter 11...♘e7 with the unpleasant 12.♘b5.

12.♕c2 h6

Black had better play 12...♖e8 with the idea to meet 13.♘b5 with the powerful 13...♗a6! He should not be afraid of 13.♗g5 h6 14.♗xf6 ♕xf6.



13.♗f4

This is a good move, no doubt about that, but not the best! It is not easy to guess why Fransisco did not play the quite obvious move 13.♘b5. I believe that was leading to a stable advantage for White.

13...♗xf4 14.gxf4 c5

Black should not fear the formation of a couple of hanging pawns in this position. It is at least not so bad as to remain with a weak pawn on c7 and with a knight stranded on a5.

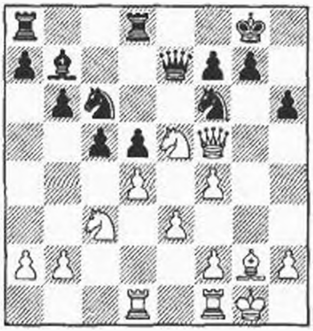
15.♖ad1 ♕e7 16.♘e5!

This is the main advantage of the appearance of the white pawn on f4 – the knight is very stable now on e5.

16...♖fd8 17.e3 ♘c6

After 17...♘c4 18.♘xc4 dxc4 19.d5! White is absolutely dominating in the centre, while in case of 17...cxd4 18.♖xd4 ♘c4 White wins a pawn with 19.♘xd5.

18.♕f5



The real power of the knight on e5 lies in the fact that Black cannot trade it at all, since the appearance of a white pawn on e5 is a big no-no for Black in this position! Generally speaking the results of the opening favour White.

18...♘b4

This knight starts another long expedition searching for a better future. It must reconnect the bishop on b7 with the vulnerable central d5-pawn.

What should White do now? He cannot pressure the d5 pawn conclusively. Fransisco finds an interesting plan.

19.♔h1!

White switches to another object for attack – the g7-pawn and the black king.

19...♖d6 20.a3

The immediate 20.♖g1 was definitely better.

20...♘a6

Note that the black knight is headed for the e6-square, because it is the best possible for it in this pawn structure. It is going to increase the pressure against d4 from there and defend g7 too...

21.♘b5 ♖e6 22.♖g1 ♘c7 23.♘xc7

Black will counter 23.♘c3 with 23...♖d6! with the idea to follow that with ♘c7-e6.

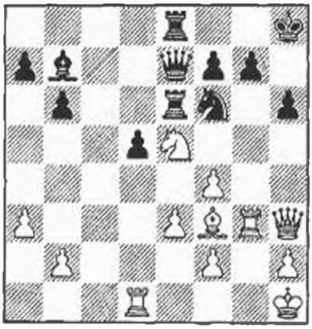
23...♕xc7 24.♗f3 cxd4

I believe Vishy understood at that moment how to cope with White's attack.

25.♖xd4 ♖ae8 26.♕h3 ♔h8 27.♖dd1

White needs a couple of moves and his pressure against the g7-pawn will become unbearable, but...

27...♕e7 28.♖g3



28...♖xe5!

This is Black's most practical decision. It is only a minute material concession – an exchange for a pawn, but Black's game now is much easier without White's powerful knight in the centre.

29.fxe5 ♕xe5

It becomes clear now that the white king is not safe at all and the bishop on b7 is only waiting for the opportune moment...

30.b4 ½ – ½

Vallejo offered a draw after having made that move and it was accepted. Of course it was a pity that the opponents did not continue that game because Black had an excellent compensation for the exchange.

One has to take into account the Anand – factor, though...

98 **D43**

Kramnik – Vallejo Pons

Round 3 24.02

Notes by S. Shipov

Kramnik played in his usual academic style and tried to win the game with technique only but he failed! The young Spanish player defended the equal endgame quite confidently.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.♘c3 e6 5.♗g5 h6

This is the Moscow variation.

6.♗xf6

The main line is – 6.♗h4 g5! 7.♗g3 dxc4.

6...♕xf6 7.g3

This line has no venom. Black equalizes if he plays correctly – for example like Vallejo did! White tries more often 7.e3.

7...♘d7 8.♗g2 dxc4

Black captures here the undefended white pawn quite reasonably – just like in the Catalan opening. Kramnik understands the Catalan positions perfectly and plays them expertly and that justifies his choice of the opening line.

9.0–0 ♗e7 10.e3 0–0 11.♕e2

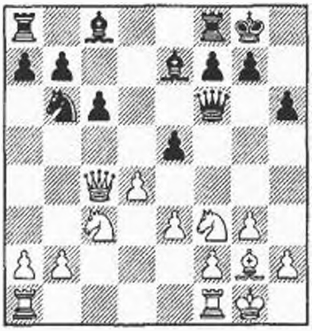
White is planning to regain his sacrificed pawn.

11...e5!

This is Black's most direct road to equality. He opens the centre and intends thus to develop his queenside. It was a poor idea for him to try to defend his extra pawn, for example: 11...b5?! 12.♘d2 ♗b7 13.♘xb5 cxb5 14.♗xb7 ♖ab8 15.♗c6 ♖fd8 16.a4 a6 17.axb5 axb5 18.♖a7!±; 11...♘b6 was a bit more reliable, but White could have played 12.♘e5 and the attempt to undermine the centre with 12...c5 was not working due to 13.♘e4 ♕f5 14.g4! ♕h7 15.♘xc5±.

12.♕xc4 ♘b6

Black's light-squared bishop has a wonderful diagonal now.



13.♕b3N

This is a novelty. The line: 13.♕e2 exd4 14.♘xd4 ♗e6! 15.b3 ♖ad8 16.

♖ad1 ♗b4 17.♘e4 ♕e7 18.♘xe6 ♕xe6 19.♕c2 ♕e7 20.g4 ♖xd1 21.♖xd1 ♖d8, led to a completely equal position and a draw was agreed to in the game Iljushin – Yevseev, Russia 1999.

13...♗e6!

After 13...exd4 14.♘xd4 Black still cannot complete his development comfortably – 14...♗g4 15.h3 ♗h5 16.♘e4 ♕e5 (16...♕g6 17.g4) 17.g4 ♗g6 18.f4 ♕c7 19.f5 and White has a powerful initiative.

14.dxe5

Otherwise the retreat of the queen to b3 would have been senseless.

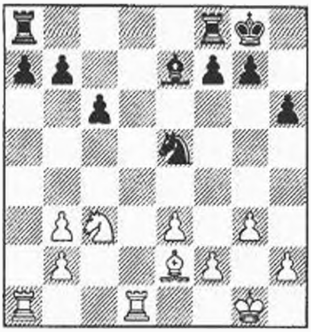
14...♕xf3

This is Black's most reliable path. He could have tried to play for more than equality with 14...♕g6!? 15.♕d1 ♖ad8 – and Black's compensation for the pawn is formidable.

15.♗xf3 ♗xb3 16.axb3 ♘d7!

Black recaptures his pawn easily now.

17.♗e2 ♘xe5 18.♖fd1



White's last chance is to organize a pawn offensive on the kingside. Presently he is threatening to push f2-f4 and to penetrate with his rook on the 7th rank.

18...♖fd8 19.♖xd8+

19.f4 ♘d7!.

19...♗xd8

Capturing with the rook was losing the a7-pawn.

20.♖d1 ♗b6 21.♘a4 ♖d8! 22.♘xb6 ♖xd1+ 23.♗xd1 axb6

This endgame is safe for both sides. The opponents played some more moves and agreed to a draw.

24.♔f1

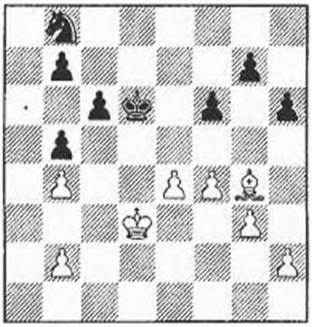
White does not achieve anything much after 24.f4 ♘d3 25.♗e2 ♘c5! 26.b4 ♘a4 etc.

24...♔f8 25.♔e2 ♔e7 26.f4 ♘d7 27.e4 f6!

Black is building a fortress with his pawns on dark squares. His b7-pawn is unassailable by the white bishop!

28.b4 b5 29.♔d3 ♘b8 30.♗g4 ♔d6

½ – ½



Black can always counter ♗g4-c8 with ♔d6-c7. The black knight goes to a6 attacking the b4-pawn and the white king will need to defend it.

99 **B80**

Leko – Kasparov

Round 3 24.02

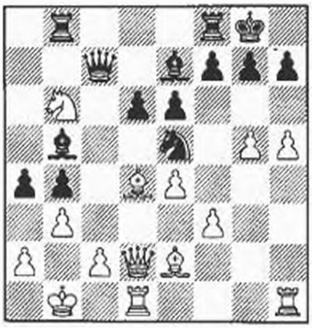
Notes by D. Yevseev

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4

♘f6 5.♘c3 a6 6.f3 e6

The game transposed to the Scheveningen variation. Kasparov decided to abandon for some reason his pet-line in the Najdorf variation – 6...e5.

7.♗e3 ♘c6 8.♕d2 ♗e7 9.0–0–0 0–0 10.g4 ♘xd4 11.♗xd4 b5 12.g5 ♘d7 13.h4 ♕c7 14.♔b1 b4 15.♘a4 ♗b7 16.b3 ♗c6 17.♘b2 a5 18.h5 ♘e5 19.♗e2 a4 20.♘c4 ♗b5 21.♘b6 ♖ab8



22.h6!

This is an important intermediate move – Black must either allow the opening of the h-file, or play g7-g6 and then White will have the possibility to attack the g7-square to the end of this game. White should not take on b5 because of the line: 22.♗xb5 ♘xf3.

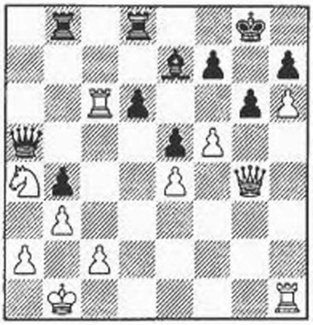
22...♗xe2

Or 22...♖xb6? 23.♗xb6 ♕xb6 24.hxg7 ♔xg7 25.♗xb5 ♕xb5 26.♖xh7!+–; 22...g6? 23.♗xb5 ♘xf3 24.♕xb4± ♘xd4? 25.♕xd4 e5 26.♘d5!+–.

23.♕xe2 g6 24.f4 ♘c6!

In case Black tries to save his a4-pawn – 24...axb3 25.cxb3 (But of course not 25.fxe5?? bxa2+ 26.♔a1 ♖xb6–+ and White cannot capture that rook because of the check on c3) 25...♘c6, then White plays 26.♕b2!, and Black's g7-square is starting to hurt.

25.♘xa4 ♘xd4 26.♖xd4 e5 27.♖c4 ♕a5 28.f5 ♗xg5 29.♖c6 ♖fd8 30.♕g4 ♗e7



31.♖d1

GM V.Popov suggested here an interesting possibility 31.fxg6!? hxg6 32.h7+, but the position is quite unclear after that: 32...♔g7 (It is not so good for Black to play 32...♔h8 33.♕f3 ♔g7 34.♕e3!. The computer suggested here 33...f5?! but after 34.♕g2± – it is not clear how Black can defend his g6-pawn. White counters 33...♖f8?! forcibly with 34.♖xd6!±) 33.♕h3. After 33...♗g5? White has the resource 34.♖xd6!±, but the check on h6 is not so dangerous for Black, and he can play 33...♕a7 instead, preserving some counterplay.

31...♕a7 32.c3!?

White's knight is eyeing the d5-square.

32...♗f8 33.fxg6 hxg6 34.h7+ ♔h8 35.cxb4 ♖xb4 36.♕f3

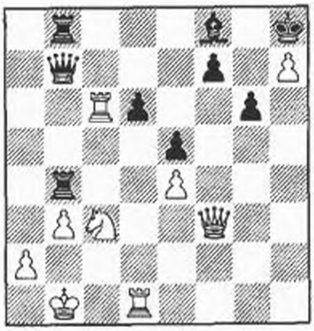
It is not good for White to play the immediate 36.♘c3? ♕b7 – because the rook on c6 is trapped and if 37.♘d5, then 37...♖xb3+!.

36...♖db8

Garry Kasparov analysed the following lines: 36...f5!? 37.exf5 ♕f7

(37...♕xa4? 38.♕d5 ♗e7 39.fxg6+–) 38.♘b6 ♕xf5+ 39.♕xf5 gxf5 40.♘c4 ♖db8 41.♘xd6 ♗xd6 42.♖cxd6 f4, as well as 36...♗g7!? 37.♘c3 ♖d4 with an unclear game in both cases.

37.♘c3 ♕b7

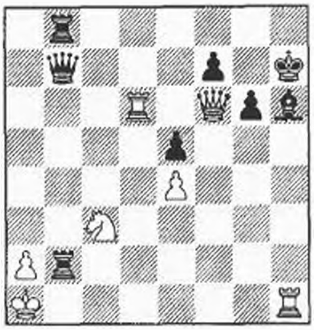


38.♖cxd6?

White is only fighting for a draw after that move. It is highly probable that both opponents were in a time-trouble at that moment. White's best is: 38.♘d5! ♕xc6 39.♘xb4 ♕d7 (It is not good for Black to take the knight: 39...♖xb4? 40.♕xf7+– and Black does not even have a perpetual 40...♖xb3+ 41.♕xb3? ♕xe4+ 42.♔a1 ♔xh7⇄; 41.axb3 ♕xe4+ 42.♔b2 ♕e2+ 43.♔c3 ♕e3+ 44.♔c2 ♕e4+ 45.♖d3+– and the White king runs gradually away from the checks; 42...♕g2+ 43.♔c3 ♕c6+ 44.♕c4 ♕xc4+ (44...♕f3+ 45.♖d3+–) 45.♔xc4 ♔xh7 46.b4+– and White has a winning endgame) 40.♘d5 ♗g7⇄. This position is very difficult to evaluate, since it is rather irrational, but we can define it as double-edged.

38...♖xb3+ 39.♔a1 ♖xc3!

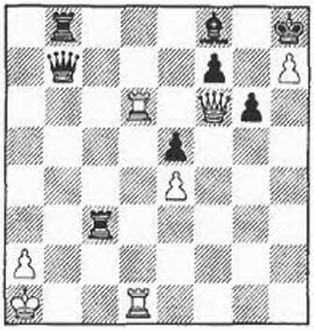
Black could have played here 39...♖b2!?, which looked very strong because it was threatening checkmate after 40...♖xa2!. White must find now an unbelievable line on order to continue the game somehow: 40.♕f6+ (40.♖6d2 ♖xd2 41.♖xd2 ♗h6–+ – White's h7-pawn is doomed now, so Black has in fact an extra pawn and a powerful bishop against a knight when the game is played on both wings, and additionally the white king is very weak.) 40...♔xh7 41.♖h1+ (41.♕xe5 ♗g7–+) 41...♗h6



42.♘b5!! (The black rook on b2 is hanging now and White has an even more powerful threat 43.♖b6!!, while 42.♕xe5 was bad because of 42...♖c2 43.♘d5 ♖xa2–+) 42...♖xb5 (White is now safe against a series of checks followed by a checkmate! 42...♔g8?! 43.♖d8+ ♖xd8 44.♕xd8+ ∆45.♔b2; 42...♖a8!? 43.♔xb2 ♕xb5+ 44.♔a1 ♕c4 45.♕f2 ♔g8⇄) 43.♖dd1. White is threatening now a checkmate after a series of checks! 43...♔g8 44.♖d8+ Now it seems that White's resources have been exhausted but... 44...♖xd8 45.♕xd8+ ♔g7 (After 45...♗f8 46.♕h4 ♗g7 47.♕d8= the final outcome will be a problem-like positional draw!) 46.♕h4! Black must part now with his extra bishop. He remains with an extra pawn indeed, because he can retreat to f6 with his king after White captures on h6, therefore Black has the time to play some useful move now. However it is not easy to predict whether Black will manage to avoid the perpetual, for example: 46...♕c6 47.♕xh6+ ♔f6 48.♖f1+ (It is not good for White to play 48.♕h8+?! ♔e7 49.♕h4+ ♕f6∓, but it was worth considering for him 48.♖c1!?) 48...♔e7 49.♕h4+ f6 50.♕h7+ ♔d8 51.♕h8+ (51.♖d1+ ♔c8) 51...♔c7 52.♕g7+ ♔b8 53.♕f8+ ♔a7 54.♕e7+ ♖b7 55.♕a3+ and the only way for Black to avoid the perpetual is to give away the f6-pawn. So, can Black play for a win after 46.♕h4 remains unclear? After 39...♖xc3! Black is clearly better!

40.♕f6+

Or 40.♕xc3 ♗xd6–+.



40...♔xh7!

It is not so clear if Black plays 40...♗g7 41.♖d8+ ♖xd8 42.♕xd8+ ♔xh7 43.♖h1+ ♗h6 44.♕g5!? (44.♕d2 g5 45.♕xc3 ♕xe4∓) 44...♔g7 45.♕xh6+ ♔f6 46.♕h4+ ♔e6 47.♕g4+, and again the Black king cannot avoid the perpetual easily. For example after 47...♔d6 48.♖d1+ ♔c6?! 49.♕e2 Δ50.♕d2 Black might even get checkmated!

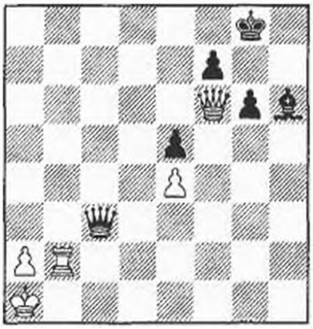
41.♖b6! ♕c7

41...♕xb6?? 42.♖h1 ♗h6 43.♕xf7+–

42.♖h1+?!

It was better for White to play 42.♖xb8 ♖c1+ 43.♖xc1 ♕xc1+ 44.♖b1 ♕c3+ 45.♖b2 ♔g8 (45...♗a3 46.♕xf7+ ♔h6 47.♕b3 ♗xb2+ 48.♕xb2 ♕e1+ 49.♕b1 ♕d2 50.♕h1+ ♔g5 51.♔b1∓ G.Kasparov) 46.♕d8 (After 46.♔b1? ♕d3+ 47.♖c2 ♗a3! White has to part with the extra exchange – 48.♕c6∓) 46...♔g7 (46...♕e1+ 47.♖b1 ♕xe4 48.♖b8=) 47.♕d2 ♗b4 48.♕xc3 ♗xc3 49.a4 g5 (In case of 49...♔f8?! 50.a5! White should be able to draw, while after 50.♔a2? ♗xb2 51.♔xb2 ♔e7–+ he simply loses.) 50.a5 g4 51.a6 g3 52.a7 g2 53.a8♕ g1♕+ 54.♔a2 ♗xb2 55.♔xb2∓ – and Black is slightly better, but it is not clear whether his advantage will suffice to win the game. The chances of Black to win and of White to draw the game are about equal.

42...♗h6 43.♖xb8 ♖c1+ 44.♖xc1 ♕xc1+ 45.♖b1 ♕c3+ 46.♖b2 ♕e1+ 47.♖b1 ♕c3+ 48.♖b2 ♔g8!∓



This is the beginning of a new phase of the fight. Black is planning to reach a queen and pawn endgame in which he will have two extra pawns, but the outcome will be still unclear because of White's mobile passed a-pawn.

49.a4

49.♕d8+?! ♔g7.

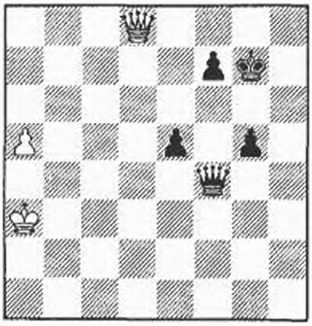
49...♗c1 50.♕b6 ♔g7

This move was not necessary and it was much better to push the g-pawn immediately – 50...g5! 51.♔a2 (White cannot save the game after 51.♔b1 ♗xb2 52.♕d8+ ♔h7 53.♕xg5 ♕d4!−+ G.Kasparov. The black king gradually avoids the checks, running to the queenside.) 51...♗xb2 52.♕xb2 ♕c4+ 53.♔a3 ♕xe4 54.a5 g4, and Black wins a very important tempo in comparison to the line that happened in the game.

51.♔a2 ♗xb2 52.♕xb2 ♕c4+ 53.♔a3 ♕xe4 54.a5 g5 55.♕d2!

This move is activating the queen. The immediate 55.a6?? was losing after 55...♕d3−+.

55...♕f4 56.♕d8



56...♕c1+?

Kasparov was probably in a desperate time-trouble and he played several unnecessary checks overlooking the winning line. Later he found the right path in his analysis: 56...g4! 57.a6 g3 58.a7 ♕f3+ (58...♕e3+? 59.♔b4 ♕xa7 60.♕g5=) 59.♔b4 g2 60.♕g5+ ♔h7 61.♔a5 f6−+ and Black wins.

57.♔b4 ♕b2+ 58.♔c5 ♕c3+ 59.♔b5

59.♔b6? ♕d4−+.

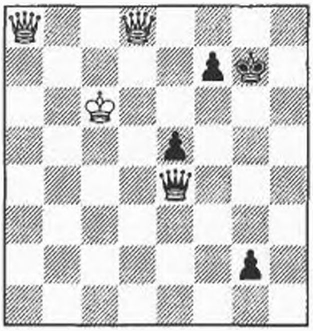
59...♕b3+ 60.♔c5 ♕c3+ 61.♔b5 ♕b3+ 62.♔c5 ♕e3+ 63.♔b4!

63.♔b5? e4 64.a6 ♕d3−+ (Kasparov).

63...♕e4+ 64.♔c5 ♕c2+ 65.♔b5 ♕e2+ 66.♔b6 ♕e3+ 67.♔c6 g4 68.a6 g3 69.a7! g2

Should Black capture that pawn it was an immediate perpetual. Black does not win either with 69...♕f3+ 70.♔c7! g2 71.a8♕ ♕xa8 (71...♕c3+ 72.♔b7 ♕f3+ 73.♔c7=) 72.♕g5+! ♔f8 73.♕h6+ ♔e7 74.♕d6=.

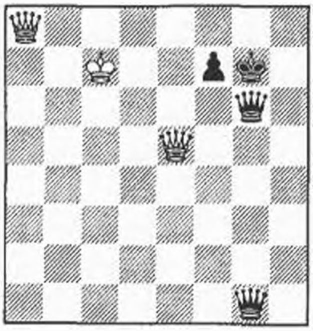
70.a8♕ ♕e4+



71.♕d5?

White now overlooked an immediate draw with 71.♔c7! ♕xa8 (Black's checks would not help: 71...♕c4+ 72.♔b7 ♕e4+ 73.♔c7=) 72.♕g5+!= (G.Kasparov)

71...♕c2+ 72.♔d6 ♕g6+ 73.♔c7 g1♕ 74.♕xe5+



74...♕f6?

This is the final mistake in this dramatic game. It was correct for Black to play 74...f6 75.♕e7+ ♔h6 76.♕af8+ ♔g5 77.♕c5+ ♕xc5+ 78.♕xc5+ ♕f5 and there would appear on the board an endgame that is considered to be theoretically winning for Black. Well, in an encounter between human beings with a ticking clock on the side the final outcome of the game could not be so certain yet...Now it is a draw.

75.♕h8+! ♔xh8 76.♕xf6+ ♕g7

76...♔g8 77.♔d6!=.

77.♕h4+ ♔g8 78.♔d6

The white king now manages to step in front of the pawn and that is the end.

78...♕g6+ 79.♔e5 ♔g7 80.♕e7!=

80.♔f4?? ♕f6–+.

80...♕g3+ 81.♔f5 ♕g6+ 82.♔e5 ♕h6 83.♔f5 ♕g6+ 84.♔e5 ♔h7 85.♕h4+ ♔g8 86.♕d8+ ♔g7 87.♕e7 ½ – ½

Black is incapable of improving his position.

100 D37

Radjabov – Ponomariov

Round 3 24.02

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.♘c3 ♗e7 5.♕c2 c5 6.cxd5

White plays here much more often 6.dxc5.

6...cxd4 7.♘xd4 0–0 8.♗g5 ♘xd5 9.♗xe7 ♘xe7 10.♖d1 ♕b6 11.♕b3 ½ – ½

White is better after this move. Radjabov was probably not in a fighting mood and so he agreed to a draw. See for example the continuation of the game: Chuchelov – Arduman, Rethymnon 2003: 11...♕xb3 12.♘xb3 ♗d7 13.e3 b6 14.♗e2 a6 15.♖d6±.

Meanwhile after the passive move 11.e3 Black's position is okay: 11...e5 12.♘f3 ♘bc6 13.♗c4 ♗f5= Miles – Van der Sterren, London 1993.

101 B30

Anand – Kramnik

Round 4 25.02

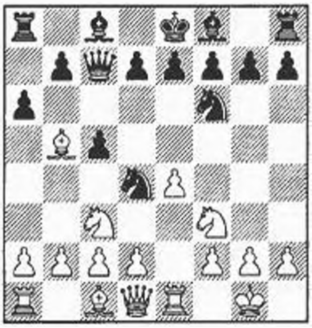
1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♘c3

This move avoids the Kalashnikov variation – 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 e5 as well as the Sveshnikov 4...♘f6 5.♘c3 e5.

3...♘f6 4.♗b5 ♕c7 5.0–0 ♘d4 6.♖e1

Anand was obviously not happy with the result of the opening in this game and so he chose against Leko 6.♘xd4.

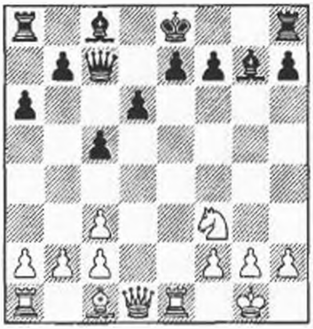
6...a6



7.e5!?

This move is quite old – it has been played for the first time by Yurtaev back in 1988. After Kramnik's new move (11...♗f5), the whole idea can be put to rest – Black is at least equal. Kasparov in his game against Leko in Linares 2003 retreated with the bishop to c4.

7...♘xb5 8.exf6 ♘xc3 9.fxg7 ♗xg7 10.dxc3 d6



This critical position is essential for the evaluation of the move 7.e5. White has a lead in development and it is dangerous for Black to castle short. Meanwhile Black has a pair of bishops and a quite elastic pawn-chain.

11.♘g5

Black should counter 11.♕d5 with 11...h6 defending the f7-square against the move ♘g5 and preparing... castling long. In case of the overly optimistic 11...0–0 Black risks coming under a powerful attack after: 12.♕h5 e5 13.♗h6 f5 14.♖ad1 f4 15.♗xg7 ♔xg7 16.♕g5+ ♔h8 17.♕h6 ♗f5 18.♕xd6±, Al Modiahki – Doghri, Tunis 1997.

11...♗f5!

White had an advantage in the first game in which this line was played: 11...h6 12.♗f4 0–0 (12...hxg5? 13.♗xd6) 13.♘e4 ♗f5 14.♕h5 ♗g6 15.♕h4 h5 16.♖ad1 ♖ae8 17.♗g5± Yurtaev – Ivanchuk, Frunze 1988.

12.a4

White cannot trap Black's bishop with 12.g4 ♗g6 13.f4, since after 13...h6 White's king becomes too exposed.

12...♕c6 13.♕e2 ♗f6 14.♘e4

It was not good for White to play 14.♘f3? because of 14...♖g8 or 14...♗g4.

14...♗xe4 15.♕xe4 ♕xe4 16.♖xe4 d5 ½ – ½

102 **B31**

Ponomariov – Leko

Round 4 25.02

Notes by S. Ivanov

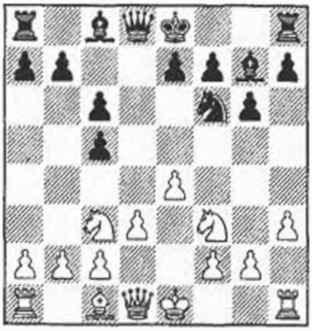
1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5

This way of avoiding the critical theoretical lines became rather popular lately on the top-level. I believe this is mostly due to Peter Leko and his fantastic preparation in the Sveshnikov variation. Ponomariov played the 3.♗b5 system thrice in Linares but his results did not impress much. He lost to Kramnik and drew twice with Anand and Leko. He was almost losing in both games and only managed to save them due to some mistakes of his worthy opponents.

3...g6 4.♗xc6

The other line – 4.0–0 ♗g7 5.c3 ♘f6 6.♖e1 0–0 etc. was played by Ponomariov in his later game against Van Wely at the European Team Championship in Plovdiv.

4...dxc6 5.h3 ♗g7 6.d3 ♘f6 7.♘c3



7...0–0

Kramnik treated this position in a different fashion in his game against Ponomariov in round two. He did not castle but played instead 7...♘d7 and later maneuvered this knight ♘d7-f8-e6 and prevented the trade of the dark squared bishops with h7-h6. Leko castles immediately and evidently thinks that the exchange of the bishops is harmless because Black is going to have a sufficient counterplay on the other side of the board.

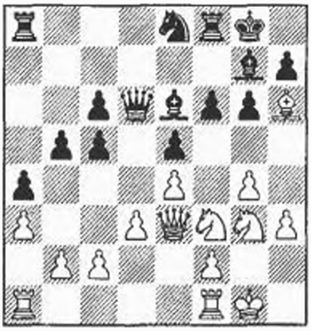
8.♗e3 b6 9.♕d2 e5 10.♗h6

It is understandable that Black can counter 10.♘xe5 with 10...♘xe4, for example 11.♘xc6 ♘xd2 12.♘xd8 ♘c4! 13.dxc4 ♖xd8∓.

10...♕d6 11.g4

This is a new plan. Ponomariov refrains from castling long as in the now famous game Shirov – Leko, Dortmund 2002: 11.0–0–0 a5 12.♗xg7 ♔xg7 13.g4 a4 14.♘e2 b5 15.♘g3 b4 16.♕g5 ♖e8 with a complicated game. He was obviously afraid of the Black's counterattack on the queenside and tried to bring his knight from c3 to g3 and then castle short.

11...♗e6 12.♕e3 a5 13.♘e2 a4 14.a3 b5 15.♘g3 ♘e8 16.0–0 f6

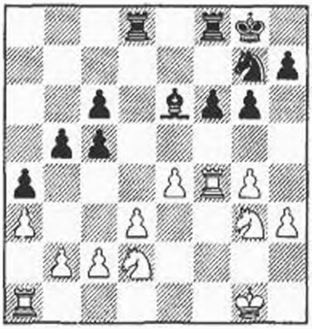


We can summarize the outcome of the opening battle. White's plan was too artificial and slow and he did not achieve anything real. Black managed to place his forces harmoniously and prepared an advance in the centre and on the queenside.

17.♘d2 ♖d8 18.♗xg7 ♘xg7 19.f4

White decided to do something instead of just waiting. He could have considered the prophylactic move 19.♖ad1 here, particularly if one had in mind what happened later in this game.

19...exf4 20.♕xf4 ♕xf4 21.♖xf4



21...c4!∓

Black takes advantage of the fact that White's knight on d2 is vulnerable and creates concrete targets for an attack in White's camp.

22.♖f3 ♗c8

Black vacates a square for the knight.

23.♘df1 ♘e6 24.♘e2

Black was threatening the rather unpleasant 24...♘g5.

24...cxd3 25.♖xd3 ♖xd3

Black has a choice now: he can create a weak pawn for White on d3 or on e4. I think that Black's best was 25...♘g5!? 26.♖e3 ♖fe8 – and the e4-pawn can be easily attacked.

26.cxd3 ♖d8 27.♖c1 c5 28.♖c3

White is forced to defend his pawn in this rather artificial way. Fortunately for him there are too few pieces left on the board and he has only one real weakness.

28...♗a6

In case of 28...b4 29.axb4 cxb4 30.♖c4 ♗a6 (30...a3 31.♖xb4 a2 32.♖a4) 31.♖xb4 ♗xd3 32.♘c3 the position evens out.

29.♔f2 ♖d6

Black has nothing substantial after 29...b4 due to 30.axb4 cxb4 31.♖c6.

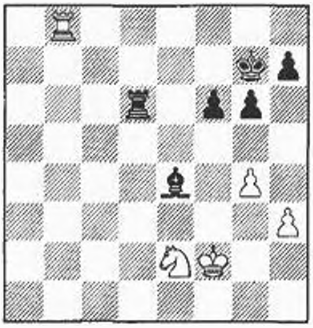
30.b4

Black was already threatening 30...b4, so White prevented that move in the most radical fashion.

30...axb3 31.♖xb3 b4 32.axb4

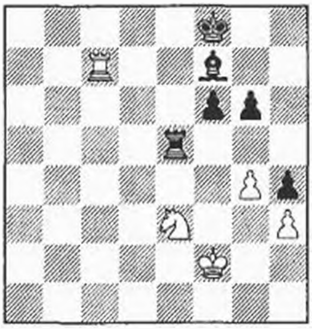
White loses a pawn now. It was more prudent to play 32.♔e3, for example 32...c4 33.dxc4 ♘c5 34.♖xb4 ♖d3+ 35.♔f2 (but please not 35.♔f4?? ♘e6#) 35...♘xe4+ 36.♔g2 ♖xa3 37.♘fg3, and draw is very likely.

32...♗xd3 33.bxc5 ♘xc5 34.♖b8+ ♔g7 35.♘fg3 ♘xe4+ 36.♘xe4 ♗xe4



So Black managed to win a pawn, but all pawns are on one side of the board and that makes Black's task extremely hard. Leko is world – famous for his endgame technique and stubbornness and he has won endgames like that...

37.♖e8 ♗d5 38.♖e7+ ♗f7 39.♖a7 ♔f8 40.♖a8+ ♗e8 41.♔e3 ♖e6+ 42.♔f2 ♖e4 43.♘c3 ♖e5 44.♖d8 ♔g7 45.♘d5 ♗f7 46.♘e3 h5 47.♖d7 ♔f8 48.♖c7 h4



Black has already something to brag about. White's weakness on h3 is fixed now and he has to worry about it constantly.

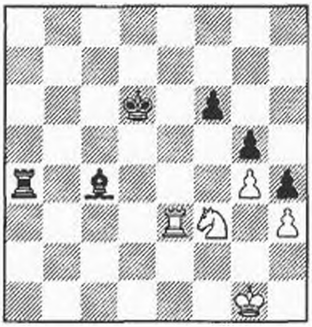
49.♖c8+ ♔g7 50.♖c7 ♖a5 51.♔f3 ♖a2 52.♘g2

Black was threatening 52...♖h2, winning the h3-pawn.

52...♖a3+ 53.♘e3 ♔f8 54.♖c8+ ♔e7 55.♖c7+ ♔e8 56.♔f2 ♗e6 57.♖c2 ♔e7 58.♖e2 ♔f7 59.♖d2 ♖a4 60.♔f3 ♗c8 61.♖b2 ♖a7 62.♔f2 ♗b7 63.♘g2 g5 64.♘e1 ♗e4 65.♖e2 ♗d5 66.♖e3 ♖a4 67.♔g1 ♗e4

The placement of the black pieces has been improving with every move and White is forced to defend passively.

68.♘f3 ♖a1+ 69.♔f2 ♖a2+ 70.♔f1 ♗d5 71.♔g1 ♖a4 72.♘e1 ♗e6 73.♘f3 ♔e7 74.♖d3 ♗c4 75.♖e3+ ♗e6 76.♖d3 ♗c4 77.♖e3+ ♔d6

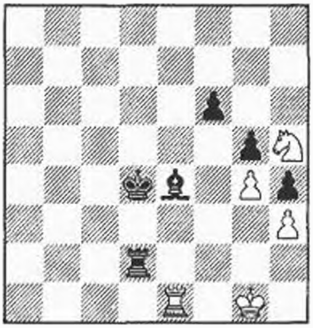


The black king is becoming a force to consider now.

78.♘d4 ♖a1+ 79.♔f2 ♖a2+ 80.♔g1 ♔c5 81.♘f5 ♖a6 82.♔f2 ♗e6 83.♘g7 ♗d5 84.♘f5 ♔c4 85.♖e2 ♗e6 86.♘g7 ♗d7 87.♖d2 ♗b5 88.♘f5 ♔c5 89.♘e3 ♗c6 90.♖c2+ ♔d4 91.♘f5+ ♔e5 92.♖c5+ ♔e4 93.♖c4+ ♔d5 94.♖c3 ♖a2+ 95.♔g1 ♗b5 96.♖e3 ♖d2 97.♘e7+ ♔c5 98.♘f5 ♔d5 99.♘e7+ ♔c5 100.♘f5 ♗d3 101.♘g7 ♖d1+ 102.♔f2 ♔d4

It is not so easy to tell where White has made a mistake but Black is very close to winning now.

103.♘e6+ ♔c4 104.♘g7 ♖d2+ 105.♔g1 ♔d4 106.♖e1 ♗e4 107.♘h5



107...f5?

This is just unbelievable! Leko reached a winning position with really heroic efforts and he did not have enough time in the decisive moment. Peter had only one and a half minutes left on the clock and he failed to find a winning line for Black. In fact he could have won in two different ways: 107...♖g2+! 108.♔f1 ♖h2 109.♘xf6 ♗g2+ 110.♔f2 (110.♔g1 ♖h1+ 111.♔f2 ♖xe1 112.♔xe1 ♔e5 113.♘h7 ♔f4–+) 110...♗c6+ 111.♔g1 ♖xh3–+ or 107...♖d3! 108.♔h2 (108.♘xf6 ♖g3+ 109.♔f1 ♖f3–+) 108...♖f3–+ ∆109.♖e2 ♖f1.

108.♘g7! fxg4

After 108...♖g2+ 109.♔f1 ♖h2 Black could have still created some serious problems for White. The draw becomes inevitable now.

109.♘e6+ ♔d5 110.♘xg5 ♗f5 ½ – ½

This was an interesting and instructive endgame! Ponomariov was defending really well and was finally rewarded for his stubbornness. Leko demonstrated his exceptional endgame technique once again.

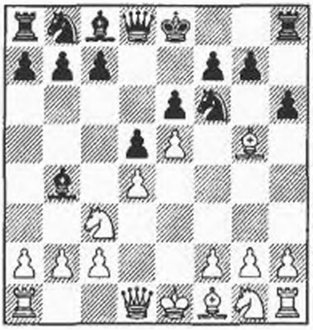
103 **C12**

Vallejo Pons – Radjabov

Round 4 25.02

Notes by D. Yevseev

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.♗g5 ♗b4 5.e5 h6



6.♗c1!?

White has three sensible retreats of this bishop: e3, d2 and c1 – and the last one is quite rarely played, but this game shows that it is also venomous.

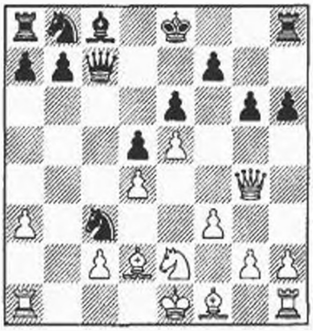
6...♘e4 7.♕g4 g6 8.♘ge2 c5 9.a3 ♗xc3+

9...♗a5 will be countered by White with 10.b4! ♘xc3 11.♘xc3 cxd4 (It is too bad for Black to play 11...cxb4?! 12.♘b5 bxa3+ 13.c3↑ and White has a powerful initiative.) 12.♘b5 ♗c7 13.f4 ♘c6 14.♗d3 a6 15.♘xc7+ ♕xc7 16.0–0 ♗d7 17.♕h4∞ Boriss – Huebner, Germany 2000.

10.bxc3 cxd4 11.cxd4 ♕c7

Black got a much inferior position in this game, so maybe he should have tried instead 11...♘c6!? 12.c3 (12.f3? ♕a5+ 13.c3 ♘xd4!∓) 12...♕a5 13.♕f3 (13.f3? ♘xd4!) 13...♗d7 14.♕e3 ♘e7⇄ ∆♗b5, ♘f5 Pohla – Arulaid, USSR 1966.

12.f3 ♘c3 13.♗d2



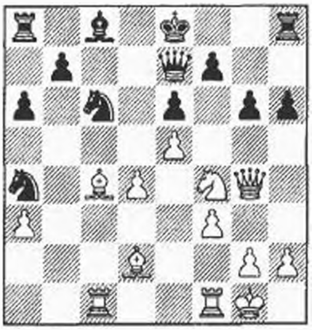
13...♘a4

This novelty is not changing the evaluation of this variation as much better for White. He is clearly superior too after: 13...♘xe2 14.♗xe2 ♗d7 (14...♕xc2?? 15.♖c1+–) 15.♗d3± Hector – S.Pedersen, Oxford 1998.

14.♘f4 a6

After this move White accomplishes a dangerous pawn-break, but Black was probably afraid to play 14...♗d7, because of 15.♗d3 threatening to sacrifice on g6. The consequences of this are far from clear though... : 15...♘c6 16.♗xg6!? (16.♘xg6 ♖g8!) 16...♘xd4!? (It is weaker for Black to play 16...♖g8 due to 17.♗xf7+! ♔xf7 18.♕h5+ ♔e7 19.♕xh6 ♘xd4 20.♕h7+ ♔f8 21.0–0!, and White's attack is almost irresistible because of the threat 22.♘xd5!. It is not so clear if White plays 17.♘xe6 ♕b6 18.♗xf7+ ♔xf7 19.♕f5+ ♔e8 20.♕h5+ ♔e7 21.♕h4+ ♔e8 – and he has a draw by a perpetual, but hardly anything more?! 22.♕xh6 ♘xe5 23.♘g7+ ♔f7 24.♕f4+ ♔xg7 25.♕xe5+ ♕f6 etc.) 17.♗xf7+ ♔xf7 18.♕g6+ ♔f8 19.♗b4+ ♘c5 20.0–0–0!.

15.c4! dxc4 16.♗xc4 ♘c6 17.♖c1 ♕e7 18.0–0±



We can summarize now the results of the opening. The dark squares in Black's camp are very weak and his king will be safe nowhere. White has a clear advantage.

18...♘b6

Or 18...♘xd4 19.♘xg6!.

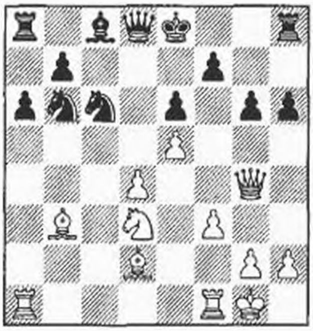
19.♘d3?!

This move is a bit strange. It was much more natural and stronger for White to play 19.♗d3±. Should Black take the pawn: 19...♕xa3 (It is a disaster for Black to play 19...h5 20.♕g3 ♘xd4?! 21.♘xg6! fxg6 22.♗e3+−) 20.♗xg6! ♖g8 21.♗xf7+ ♔xf7 22.♕h5+ ♔e7 23.♕xh6, White has a tremendous attack for the piece. I am at a loss what to recommend for Black...

19...♕xa3 20.♖a1?!

It was very good for White to play simply 20.♘f2!? Δ♘e4-d6.

20...♕e7 21.♗b3 ♕d8!



It becomes clear now that White's knight on d3 is totally misplaced. Black still has plenty of problems to solve but he has an extra pawn after all and White must defend his d4-pawn somehow.

22.♗e3 ♘d5 23.♗f2?!

White got completely baffled in that position. He still had a good compensation for the pawn after 23.♗xd5!? exd5 (23...♕xd5 24.♘c5!=∞ Δ♘e4) 24.♕g3=∞.

23...h5!

Black defends stubbornly and cold-bloodedly in a difficult position. It is evident that White will have to lose another pawn.

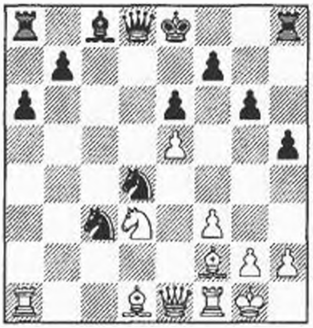
24.♕e4

It was not any better for White to play 24.♕g3 ♘c3. After 24.♕h3 Black can even play 24...♘xd4!? (24...♘c3 is very good too) with the idea to follow 25.♗xd4 (White's best is 25.♗d1) with 25...♘f4!.

24...♘c3 25.♕e1

Or 25.♕e3 ♘xd4!.

25...♘xd4 26.♗d1



Black managed to capture two pawns in the last several moves, while White did not improve his position at all. Nevertheless White still has some compensation because Black's dark squares are very vulnerable and the position is very dynamic too.

26...♘db5

Black should not be too greedy – 26...♘xf3+?! 27.♗xf3 ♕xd3 28.♗c5.

27.♘c5 0–0 28.♗a4 ♘xa4

But not 28...♗d7? 29.♘xd7 ♕xd7 30.♕xc3.

29.♖xa4 f5!

Black must necessarily prevent the appearance of the white knight on f6.

30.♕c1

30.exf6!? ♕xf6.

30...♔h7 31.♖c4 ♕e8 32.♕g5 b6

Black is forced to part with one of his extra pawns otherwise he cannot complete his development successfully.

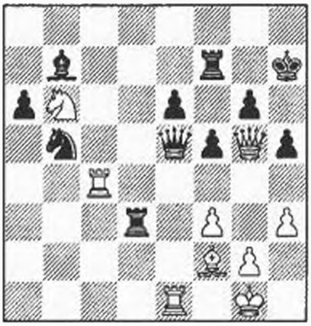
33.♘a4 ♗b7 34.♗e3 ♕f7 35.♘xb6 ♖ad8 36.♖fc1 ♕g7 37.h3

White had better play 37.♘a4!? improving the placement of his knight.

37...♖d3 38.♗c5 ♖f7 39.♗f2

White was obviously afraid to play 39.f4, because the long diagonal would have been opened for the black bishop.

39...♕xe5 40.♖e1



40...♕g7

White would have managed to capture the e6-pawn even after 40...♕f6: 41.♕xf6 ♖xf6 42.♗h4 ♖f7 43.♖xe6∓. Black however would have remained with two extra pawns after 40...♕d6. He evidently decided to play safe on the last move of the time-control although after 41.♗e3 e5! 42.♕h6+ ♔g8 the situation of the black king is not very reliable but it is not quite clear how White can exploit that effectively.

41.♖xe6 ♘d4 42.♖e1 f4!

This is a good move restricting White's pieces and mostly the queen. Black does not need to present White with additional counterchances with 42...♗xf3 43.♖xd4! (In case of 43.♗xd4 ♖xd4 44.gxf3 ♖xc4 45.♘xc4 ♕d4+ 46.♘e3 f4 47.♕d5 ♕a7! Black regains his sacrificed piece and preserves a big advantage after: 48.♔g2 fxe3 49. ♖xe3!∓) 43...♖xd4 44.gxf3, although even then after 44...♖d3 Black is not worse at all.

43.♗xd4

This is definitely a concession, because White forfeits the chance to play for a draw because of the opposite coloured bishops. He did not have too many useful moves left anyway and the black knight was very active indeed.

43...♖xd4 44.♔h1 ♖d6 45.♘a4 ♖d5

45...♕f6!?∓.

46.♕h4 ♕f8 47.♕f2 ♕d6 48.♘c5 ♖df5∓ ½ – ½

Black had a solid extra pawn here. Radjabov probably felt too tired after the excitement of the complications in this game and offered a draw. Naturally it was accepted thankfully.

104 **E18**

Kasparov – Ponomariov

Round 5 27.02

Notes by S. Shipov

Garry is back in action! He won quite convincingly today against the World Champion of FIDE...

1.d4!?

This is the first surprise! It was expected that Kasparov was going to try to conquer the Berlin wall after his usual 1.e4. Meanwhile he served with his racket in the other hand...

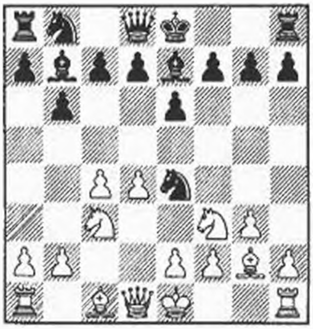
1...♘f6 2.♘f3 e6 3.g3

This is an interesting move order. Black can now go into the Catalan Opening, or the Queen's Indian Defence.

3...b6

Ruslan prefers the latter. He also had another more ambitious move – 3...b5, with the idea to occupy some additional space on the queenside. I have played like that with Black and I think that White has no easy way to fight for an opening advantage.

4.♗g2 ♗b7 5.c4 ♗e7 6.♘c3 ♘e4



Black is blocking the key central square in this opening. He could have also done that after castling.

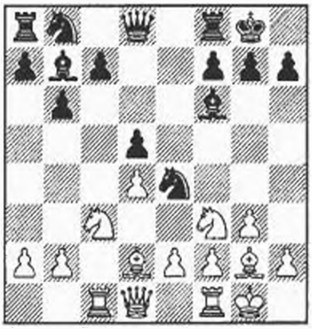
7.♗d2 ♗f6

The bishop has occupied the vacated square immediately. Black often lets the pawn forward first with – 7...f5 and plays ♗e7-f6 only then. There is a lot of strategical risk involved in that too. Black must play very precisely then...

8.0–0 0–0 9.♖c1 d5

I suspect that Ruslan was not prepared for that opening before the game and so he decided to treat it in the safest possible way. Black's most principled line here is 9...c5 10.d5 exd5 11.cxd5 and later, after the exchange of the knight on e4 for the white knight on d2, or the bishop on c3, Black plays d7-d6 entering a position which is very similar to the Modern Benoni opening. In case of 9...d6 White can also play 10.d5 ♘xd2 11.♕xd2, gaining some extra space in the process.

10.cxd5 exd5



This is a standard pawn structure that has been analysed and studied extensively. White preserves some pressure in the centre.

11.♗f4 ♘xc3

This quite rare move is again in the spirit of obtaining a simple and safe position. It was much more in harmony with the concepts of the Queen's Indian Defence to continue with 11...♘a6!, preserving the powerful knight in the centre. White could have tried to go on fighting for an advantage with 12.♗e5.

12.bxc3

The capture 12.♖xc3 would have led to a double-edged position after 12...c5 13.♗e5 ♗e7! as in the game Novikov – Rozentalis, Lviv 1985.

12...♘a6?!

This novelty can hardly be regarded as satisfactory. Ruslan probably thought that White intends to prepare c3-c4 and he would have countered that with c7-c5! with an excellent counterplay. Garry meanwhile kept his pawn quite cleverly on c3 and opted for a quite different plan. As a result of that Black's knight on a6 remained completely out of play! In the game Kochyev – Qvortrup, Gausdal 1991, Black tried here 12...♖e8 13.c4 dxc4 14.♖xc4 ♘a6 15.♕c2 c5 16.♘g5! and White obtained a dangerous initiative. I believe that Black's best resource here is the move 12...♘c6! –with the idea to follow that with ♘a5 or ♘e7 later. If White plays 13.c4, then after 13...dxc4 14.♖xc4 b5 15.♖c5 ♘xd4, the simplifications evidently lead to complete equality. Garry's move in the game would have been countered much better by Black with a knight on c6 too...

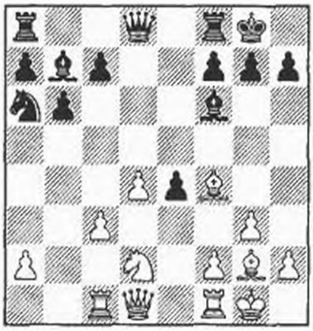
13.e4!

This is a powerful pawn-break after which White has a clear advantage.

13...dxe4

Otherwise White will push that pawn to e5 with a dangerous kingside attack to follow...

14.♘d2



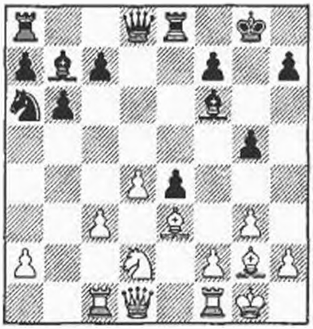
14...g5?

This is so to speak – the hard way! Ruslan decided not to give back the e4-pawn that White would have easily regained after the other possible moves. Meanwhile the weakening of his king is quite considerable. Note that all this is happening with a completely useless black knight on a6! It is too dangerous to play like that, and not only against Kasparov, though... I believe that Black had better try to bring his knight into the centre instead with 14...c6 15.♘xe4 ♗e7 followed by ♘a6-c7 next. The bishop on b7 needs to cover against the pressure of its counterpart on g2, because White can exploit in plenty of lines the possibility to play ♘e4-f6+ with a check, followed by a capture on b7 next. Starting at that moment White has so many attractive possibilities at every move that it is absolutely impossible to determine what the best is!

15.♗e3!

White is not in a hurry at all. The analysis of the sharp line 15.♘xe4 ♗xe4 16.♗xe4 gxf4 17.♕h5 ♖e8 18.♕xh7+ ♔f8 19.♗b7 c5 20.♗xa6 cxd4 leads to a position with a quite inconclusive evaluation. White has an extra pawn and an initiative indeed, but that might turn out not to be sufficient to win because of the opposite coloured bishops. Black starts to simplify and then who can tell what will happen next...

15...♖e8



16.f4!

This is evidently the best. White opens the f-file. After 16.♕h5, which seemed to me to be the best during the game, Black has the powerful argument 16...c5 and if 17.f4, then not 17...exf3 18.♘xf3! with a strong attack for White, but 17...g4 18.♕xg4+ ♔h8, blocking the dangerous files and organizing a powerful counterplay in the centre.

16...exf3 17.♗xf3 ♗d5!

This is Black's most stubborn defence. It is too bad for Black to play 17...♖xe3 18.♗xb7 ♖xc3 because of the cold-blooded 19.♘b3! ♖xc1 20.♕xc1 and White remains with an extra piece in all lines. The quantity of pawns remaining on the board is practically immaterial, because the black king is very vulnerable...

18.♗xd5 ♕xd5 19.♖xf6 ♖xe3 20.♕g4

Black had prepared to counter 20.♕h5 with the tactical strike 20...♖xc3!, while after 20.♕f1, the seemingly dead knight on a6 was suddenly springing to life with – 20...♘c5!.

20...♖e6

It is hardly possible to recommend 20...♖ae8, because of 21.♘f3 ♖3e4 22.♕h5!.

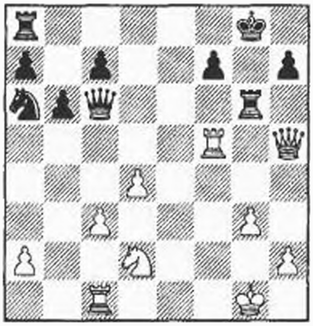
21.♖f5 ♕c6

Black maybe had to venture the risky move 21...♕xa2!?, since he did not have much to lose at that moment anyway! White had then 22.♕xg5+ ♖g6 23.♕f4 with a dangerous attack for him.

22.♕xg5+

It was evidently better for White to play 22.♖cf1, for example 22...♕xc3 23.♖xf7 ♕e3+ 24.♖1f2 ♖g6 25.♕f5! ♔h8 26.♕d7 ♖h6 27.♖e7 and that would have been the end for Black.

22...♖g6 23.♕h5



White has already regained his pawn and meanwhile the black knight still remains on a6!

23...♖f8

Or 23...♖e8 24.♘f3 f6 25.♘h4 ♖g7 26.♖xf6!+–.

24.♘f3 f6 25.♘h4 ♖g7 26.♕h6 ♘b8

Black finally manages to bring his knight back into action, but it is already too late...

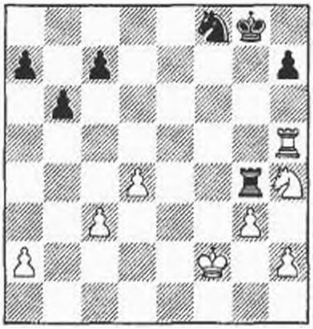
27.♖h5 f5

This is an attempt by Black to try to save an endgame with a pawn down. It is quite understandable that the black king will hardly survive in a middlegame with a white knight on f5.

28.♕f4

It was also very good for White to continue with: 28.♘xf5 ♕xh6 29.♘xh6+ ♔h8 30.♖e1.

28...♕e4 29.♖f1 ♕xf4 30.♖xf4 ♖g4 31.♖fxf5 ♘d7 32.♖xf8+ ♘xf8 33.♔f2!



The endgame turns out to be an easy win for White. He centralizes his king quickly and prevents the possibility of Black activating his pieces.

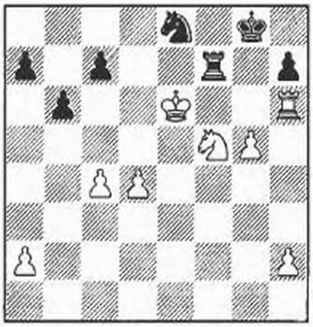
33...♘d7

Or 33...c5 34.♔f3!.

34.♘f5 ♔h8 35.♔f3 ♖g8 36.♖h6 ♖f8 37.g4 ♘f6 38.c4! ♔g8 39.♔f4 ♖f7 40.g5 ♘e8 41.♔e5

Black's pieces are isolated at the edge of the board.

41...♖d7 42.♔e6 ♖f7



Now White finds an exquisite tactical trick.

43.♖f6! ♘xf6 1–0

And here Black decided not to wait for the execution of the variation: 43...♘xf6 44.gxf6 ♖f8 (44...♔f8 45.♘h6!) 45.f7+ ♔h8 (45...♖xf7 46.♘h6+) 46.♔e7 to the bitter end and resigned instead. Kasparov played that game just superbly.

105 **B48**

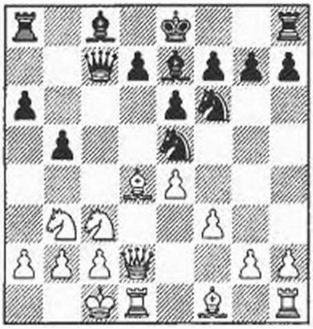
Leko – Vallejo Pons

Round 5 27.02

Notes S. Shipov

Peter won this game quite convincingly and he did not give a single counter chance to one of the most promising Spanish players. The game itself is an example of an exquisite positional play.

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♕c7 5.♘c3 e6 6.♗e3 a6 7.♕d2 ♘f6 8.0–0–0 ♗b4 9.f3 ♘e5 10.♘b3 b5 11.♗d4 ♗e7



This is a fashionable contemporary line of the Sicilian Defence. The play is usually very sharp with mutual checkmating attacks. Now in this game, with Leko playing White it was all so much calmer...

12.♕g5N

This is an interesting novelty. White has played before 12.♕f2 d6 13.♔b1 0–0 14.g4 ♘fd7 15.♖g1 ♗b7 16.g5 ♖fc8 17.a3 ♘c4 18.♗xc4 bxc4 19.♘c1 ♖ab8 20.♘1e2 ♗c6 21.♔a1± Kasparov – Ye Jiangchuan, Bled 2002, as well as 12.♔b1 d6 13.♕f2 0–0 14.g4 b4 15.♘a4 ♗b7 16.♖g1 ♘fd7 17.♘b6 ♖ab8 18.g5 ♖fd8 19.♘xd7 ♘xd7 20.h4, again with slightly better chances for White, Leko – Lutz, Essen 2002.

12...♘g6 13.♕g3!

This is the idea of the novelty – White intends to go into a better endgame.

13...♗d6 14.♕f2 ♖b8

I am not sure, but maybe Black had to venture here the capture 14...♗xh2 – the point is that here his king is in the centre and White's eventual attack along the h-file has no target yet! The other interesting possibility for Black was – 14...♗b7.

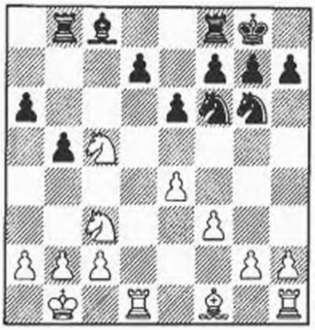
15.♔b1 0–0 16.♗c5!

Exchanges are unavoidable now.

16...♗xc5 17.♕xc5 ♕xc5

The stubborn line 17...♕b7 18.e5 ♘e8 is not attractive for Black at all after 19.♗d3 and White's advantage is evident.

18.♘xc5



The endgame is definitely in favour of White who can attack the a6, b5 and d7-pawns. It is really instructive to watch how Peter improves gradually his position without allowing any effective counterplay by his opponent.

18...♖b6 19.a4 ♖c6 20.♘d3 bxa4 21.♘xa4 d5 22.exd5 ♘xd5

It was worth trying the move 22...exd5, with the idea to activate Black's passive bishop. It was quite possible that he had to try to compensate his pawn weaknesses with a dynamic play.

23.♘dc5 ♘e5 24.♖d4!

This is a combination of active play and prophylactics too. 24.♗e2 ♘f4!.

24...♘d7 25.♘xd7 ♗xd7 26.♗c4 ♘f6 27.♖e1!

White prevents e6-e5.

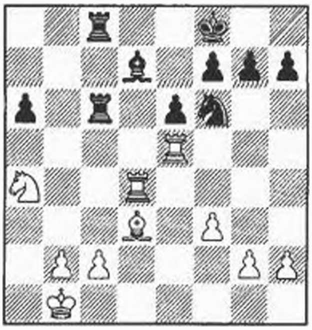
27...♖fc8

27...♖e8 28.f4!.

28.♗d3!

This is the best square for the bishop. The a6-pawn remains under attack, the white pawn on c2 is defended and White's rooks are free for action.

28...♔f8 29.♖e5!



White's rook is transferred to a5 and the game begins to resemble the true classics!

29...♖8c7 30.♖a5 ♗c8 31.b4!

It is time to advance the pawns and to centralize the king. It is evident that White will soon create a passed pawn on the queenside.

31...♘d5 32.♔b2 g6 33.♔b3 ♘e3

This is Black's first... and last active move in that game.

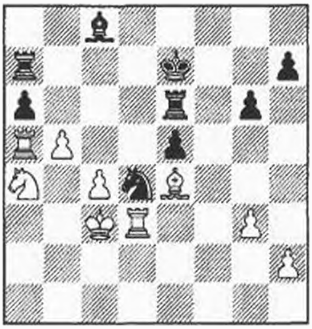
34.♘c5 ♖a7

In case of 34...♘xg2 35.♗xa6 White would have obtained two connected passed pawns. The passive defence was equally hopeless.

35.g3 ♔e7 36.f4 f6 37.♗e4 ♖b6 38.c4 e5 39.fxe5 fxe5 40.♖d3 ♘f5 41.♘a4!

This is the beginning of the final onslaught.

41...♖e6 42.b5! ♘d4+ 43.♔c3 1–0



White takes advantage of the pin of the a6-pawn and pushes his pawn to b6. So he obtains two connected passed pawns that are absolutely unstoppable despite the material equality. Black's pawns are blocked and his pieces are passive. Vallejo resigned and you cannot blame him at all that his decision was premature. Leko's convincing victory in this game made him the leader of the tournament after it.

106 **E12**

Radjabov – Anand

Round 5 27.02

Notes by S. Shipov

Vishy was confronted with a powerful opening novelty in this game, but he kept cool! He then managed to defend with a striking precision and neutralized the offensive of his young opponent and finally equalized.

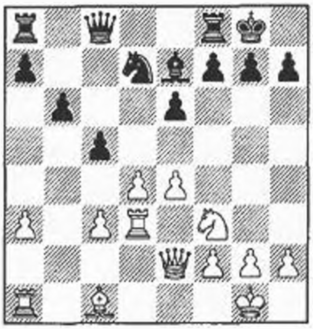
1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 b6 4.♘c3 ♗b7 5.a3 d5 6.cxd5 ♘xd5 7.♕c2 ♘xc3 8.bxc3 ♗e7 9.e4 0–0 10.♗d3 c5 11.0–0

This is Radjabov's favourite line in the Queen's Indian Defence. Unfortunately it is not bringing him any particular success at the top-level.

11...♕c8 12.♕e2

White must avoid the exchange of queens. Teimour chose against Leko 12.♕a2.

12...♗a6 13.♖d1 ♗xd3 14.♖xd3 ♘d7



15.e5!N

This is a new and a very purposeful move! White restricts the black knight and gains open space to organize a piece attack against the black king. The rook on d3 is very handy, because it can join the attack directly against the king after just a single move. White usually played here before ♗g5 or ♗f4 and he did not have any particular success after that, for example: 15.♗f4 ♖e8 16.♖e3 cxd4 17.cxd4 ♕b7 18.a4?! (18.♖d1 b5!) 18...♖ac8 19.h3 ♗b4 20.♖d1 a5 and Black had excellent winning chances thanks to his pawn majority on the queenside, Komliakov – Miles, Alushta 1999.

15...♕c6 16.♗g5

This combines development and attack.

16...♖fe8!

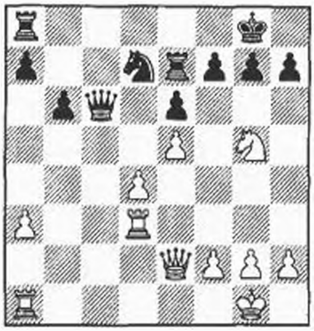
This is the first step towards salvation. The rook is placed on the correct file and meanwhile the f8-square is vacated for the knight.

17.♗xe7 ♖xe7 18.♘g5

The knight assault is seemingly very logical, since White is already threatening to capture on h7, following by ♖d3-h3 and ♕e2-h5 with a decisive attack. Should the attack fail or something... – the knight will be very comfortable on e4, but...

18...cxd4 19.cxd4

Black was not afraid of 19.♘xh7 dxc3! 20.♘g5 ♕c4!, since White fails to create dangerous checkmating threats.



19...f6!

This opening of the centre is quite timely. Black complies with the creation of a weak pawn on e6, since the elimination of the dangerous cramping white e5-pawn is his priority number one!

20.exf6 ♘xf6 21.♖e1

It looks like White's initiative is very powerful, but...

21...h6!

Anand has a prepared response to everything.

22.♘f3

White is forced to retreat without even having tasted the bread... It was too bad for him to play 22.♘xe6? ♘d5! and the pin along the e-file might be disastrous for him.

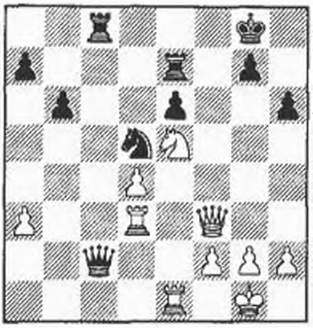
22...♖c8!

This is one more very precise move. Black has a pawn majority of two against one on the queenside, so he should strive to go into an endgame.

23.♘e5

After 23.♖e3 ♘d5! 24.♖xe6 ♖xe6 25.♕xe6+ ♕xe6 26.♖xe6 ♖c3, White will have an extra pawn, but he should play very carefully on order to avoid the loss.

23...♕c2! 24.♕f3 ♘d5



Teimour showed common sense here! He had no advantage anymore and after some simplification his position might become even worse. He played the move:

25.♕g3 ½ – ½

and offered a draw. Vishy agreed, probably because his king was too exposed.

107 **B30**

Anand – Leko

Round 6 28.02

Notes by S. Shipov

Essentially that game was decided right in the opening! Vishy caught his *opponent in a prepared line and got an overwhelming advantage. Peter was defending stubbornly for long and resisted as well as he only could, but in the end he failed to change the irrevocable bitter end...*

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.♗b5 ♕c7 5.0–0 ♘d4

I would not be surprised if this move, played quite often until now, would be qualified as dubious after that game. Black had a sensible alternative in – 5...e6.

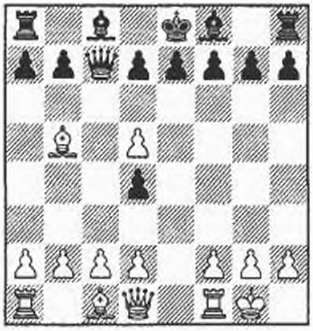
6.♘xd4!

White played like that only quite rarely. He used to play regularly instead 6.♖e1.

6...cxd4 7.♘d5 ♘xd5

After 7...♕c5, White might add some more firepower with – 8.b4!.

8.exd5



All knights left the board just in a couple of moves. You can seldom witness something like that in the opening.

8...♕c5

Black had better continue his development prudently with – 8...g6, and White probably would have followed that with 9.♖e1, emphasizing the weakness of the e7-pawn.

9.c4!

I know of a game between some not too familiar (to me!) players in which White failed to achieve any advantage after 9.♕e2 ♕xd5 10.c4 ♕f5 11.b4 e6 12.♗b2 ♗xb4 13.♗xd4 0–0, Boudre – Godard, France 1998.

9...dxc3?

Leko's ambition to play the most principled lines goes a little bit too far. He was obviously too curious – "What if...?" Peter knows now, but he paid a dear price for it! It was much stronger for him to play 9...a6 10.♗a4 b5! and the least that Black could do was develop his queenside. There might follow plenty of interesting lines that you could probably find in Vishy's laptop computer...

10.♕b3!

White's lead in development is so great that Black's extra pawn is absolutely immaterial. Black risks being crushed with his king stranded in the centre!

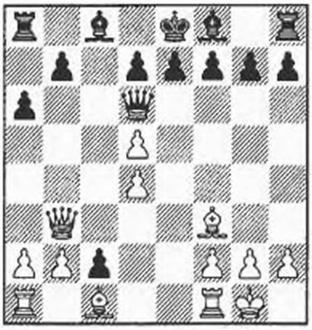
10...a6 11.♗e2 c2

Black's attempt to return the stolen goods fails, because the thief has already been caught!

12.d4! ♕d6

12...♕xd4 13.♗e3!.

13.♗f3



Black has been stepped on by an iron heel!

13...g6 14.♗d2

White plans to go to b4 with his bishop. It is possible that the simple 14.♖e1 is even stronger, for example 14...♗g7 (14...h6 15.♗d2!) 15.♗g5 ♗f6 16.♗h6! ♗xd4 17.♖ac1 and White's initiative is overwhelming.

14...♕f6

Black is trying to put a pawn on d6. In case of 14...♗g7 and 15.♗b4 ♕b6 16.♖fe1 Black has 16...d6!, but it is much better for White to play the immediate 15.♖fe1!.

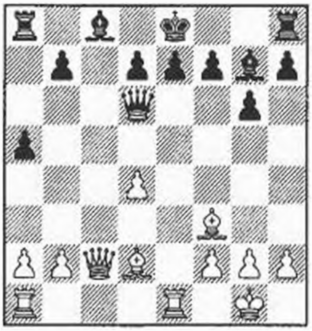
15.d6!

This is an exquisite pawn-sacrifice! White's bishop is attacking the b7-pawn and the d7-pawn is blocked again.

15...♕xd6 16.♖fe1 a5

There was no other defence.

17.♕xc2 ♗g7



18.♗xa5

It will soon become clear – that pawn is not just a trifle.

18...0–0

That was Black's first success to brag about – he managed to evacuate his king!

19.♗c3 ♖e8 20.♕b3 ♕c7 21.a4!

White is trying to stalemate Black's queenside.

21...d6 22.a5

It becomes obvious that White has a tremendous positional advantage.

22...♖b8 23.♖ec1!

This is the correct rook for the job, because White must be able to counter b7-b6 with a5-a6.

23...♗f5 24.♗d2 ♕d7 25.♗e3

This bishop is only at the beginning of its glorious career in this game. It is going to become a hero!

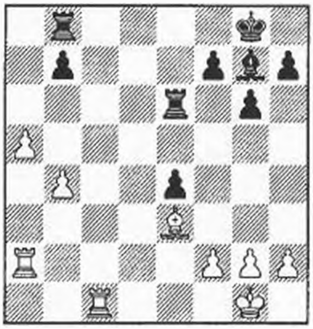
25...e5

The attempt to get some counterplay would have been fruitless after: 25...♗g4 26.♗xg4 ♕xg4 27.♖c7±.

26.dxe5 dxe5 27.♗d5!

The bishop must come here before Black plays e5-e4.

27...♗e6 28.♗xe6 ♕xe6 29.♕xe6 ♖xe6 30.b4 e4 31.♖a2



White has great chances to win that endgame, because of the possibility to create an outside passed pawn. The presence of the bishops on the board is essential, because it is quite advantageous to the stronger side. Unfortunately Black cannot exchange them.

31...♗e5 32.g3 ♔f8 33.♖c4 f5

Starting at that moment, Vishy begins to play quite patiently, because of the time-trouble of his opponent, manoeuvreing with his pieces mostly. I believe it was much easier to simply try to promote his passed pawn. In general this is a typical feature of the style of the Indian grandmaster – sometimes when he has the advantage he lets his opponents off the hook, but not quite... Later he finds a way to finish them off again. In other words – just like a cat and mouse play...

34.♖d2

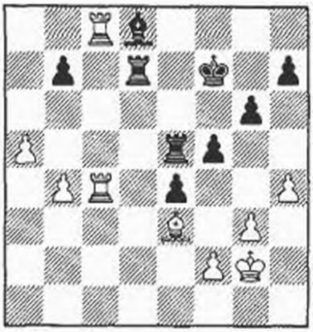
34.b5!? ♖a8 35.a6! followed by ♖c4-a4.

34...♔e8 35.♖d5 ♖d8 36.♖b5 ♖d7 37.♖cc5 ♗f6 38.♖c8+ ♔f7 39.♔g2 ♖e8 40.♖c4 ♗e5 41.h4

The time-trouble is over and it is time Vishy started something active, indeed.

41...♗f6 42.♖bc5 ♗d8 43.♖c8 ♖e5

After 43...♗f6 Vishy would have hardly refrained from 44.b5!.



44.♖xd8!

This was an exquisite winning combination.

44...♖xd8 45.♖c7+ ♔e6!

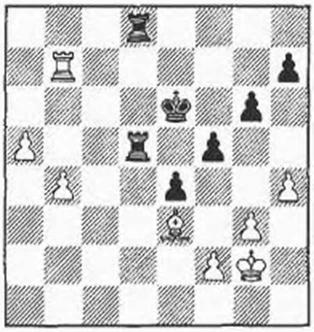
Peter here as well as later plays the most stubborn defensive lines and forces his opponent to show excellent technique. It was hopeless to go into a king and pawn endgame with – 45...♖c7 46.♖xe7+ ♔xe7 47.♗g5+ ♔d7 48.♗xd8 ♔xd8 49.f3! ♔d7 50.b5 ♔d6 51.fxe4 fxe4 52.♔f2 ♔c5 53.a6 bxa6 54.bxa6 ♔b6 55.♔e3 ♔xa6 56.♔xe4, and the white king would be closer to the treasure island.

46.♖xb7

Black is naturally helpless to stop the powerful couple of passed pawns supported by the almighty bishop, but...

46...♖ed5!

Black is planning to create checkmating threats against the white king along the 1st rank.



47.♖xh7!

You can see the main line of Black's idea after 47.a6 ♖d1 48.a7 ♖a1 49.g4 ♖dd1!.

47...♖b5

The same idea is useless now after: 47...♖d1 48.♖g7 ♔f6 49.♖b7 ♔e6 50.♖b6+ ♔f7 51.♗g5 ♖8d7 52.a6 ♖a1 53.g4! and the white king finds a safe haven on the e5-square.

48.♗c5!

The black rook is trapped now.

48...♖d2 49.♔f1 ♖a2 50.♖c7 f4

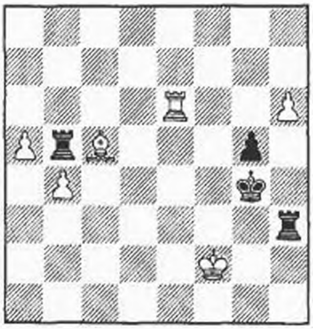
51.♖e7+ ♔f6 52.♖xe4 fxg3 53.fxg3 g5

Black would not have saved the game in a rook and pawn endgame with two pawns down.

54.h5!

White is expertly refuting all attempts by Black to get something resembling counterplay.

54...♔f5 55.♖e2 ♖a3 56.♔g2 ♔g4 57.h6 ♖xg3+ 58.♔f2 ♖h3 59.♖e6



White now has three passed pawns and Black is incapable to cope with them.

59...♖b7

59...♔f5 60.♖b6! ♖xb6 61.axb6 ♖xh6 62.b7+−.

60.♔e2 ♔f5 61.a6

It was simpler for White to play 61.♖c6!.

61...♖h2+ 62.♔e3 ♖d7

62...♖h3+ 63.♔f2!

63.♖d6 ♖xd6 64.♗xd6 ♖xh6

The game comes closer to safety, but the hunter is delivering his last shot...

65.a7!

White wins because of a single tempo now.

65...♖h3+

65...♖h8 66.♗b8! ♖h3+ 67.♔d4 ♖a3 68.b5+−.

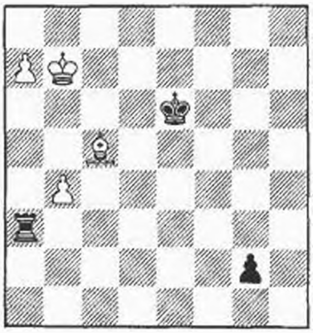
66.♔d4 ♖a3 67.♗c5! g4

In case of 67...♔e6 White wins, because of the possibility to cover the a-file, interposing from the a5-square after 68.♗b6!.

68.♔d5

Vishy obviously decided not to try to run away from the checks after 68.b5 g3 69.♗xa3 g2 70.a8♕ g1♕+.

68...g3 69.♔c6 g2 70.♔b7 ♔e6



71.♗g1!

White avoided the last trap of insidious Peter. After 71.a8♕? ♖xa8 72.♔xa8 ♔d5 73.♔b7 ♔c4 74.♔c6, the White bishop would have two pawns to worry about – 74...g1♕!=.

71...♔d5 72.b5 1–0

Black resigned and Anand displaced Leko from the leadership in the tournament.

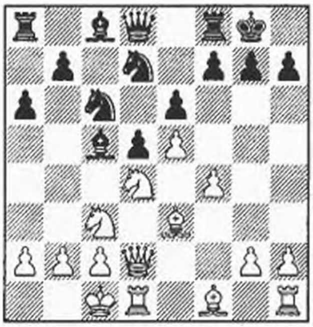
108 **C11**

Kramnik – Radjabov

Round 6 28.02

Notes by D. Yevseev

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.e5 ♘fd7 5.f4 c5 6.♘f3 ♘c6 7.♗e3 cxd4 8.♘xd4 ♗c5 9.♕d2 0–0 10.0–0–0 a6



11.♕f2!?

This rare line is really poisonous. White plays here often 11.h4 and 11.♔b1 too.

11...♘xd4?!

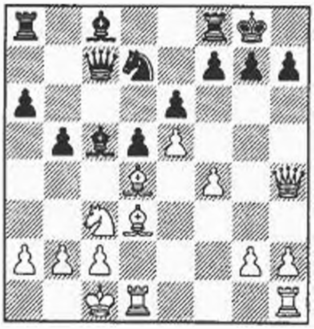
This is an obvious imprecision. Black had better play 11...♗xd4 12.♗xd4 b5 with the idea to follow with b5-b4, a6-a5 and later ♗c8-a6 and to exchange the light-squared bishops as soon as possible.

12.♗xd4 ♕c7 13.♗d3 b5?!

Once again it is better for Black to play 13...♗xd4 immediately, particularly if you have in mind White's next move.

14.♕h4!

Black must comply now with a rather unnecessary weakening of his kingside after this powerful novelty. White used to play before 14.♘e2 ♗e7! and it was not so clear.



14...h6

After 14...f5 Kramnik recommends: 15.exf6 ♘xf6 16.♗e5 ♗d6 17.g4! b4 (17...♗xe5 18.fxe5 ♕xe5 19.g5 ♘e4 20.♘xe4 ♖f4 21.♘f6+–) 18.g5 bxc3 19.gxf6 g6 20.f7+! ♖xf7 21.♗xg6+–.

15.♘e2 f6

Black makes this move reluctantly otherwise the march forward of White's g-pawn: g2-g4-g5 is very dangerous.

16.♕g4 ♗xd4

It is too bad for Black to play 16...fxe5? 17.♕xe6+ ♔h8 18.♕g6.

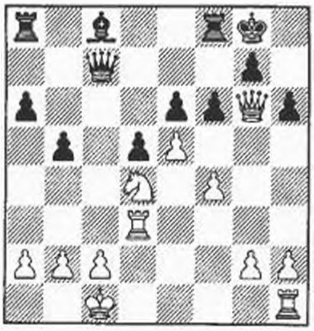
17.♘xd4

White achieves nothing after 17.♕xe6+? ♔h8 18.♘xd4 ♘xe5 19.♕xd5 ♘xd3+ 20.♖xd3 ♕xf4+.

17...♘c5 18.♕g6 ♘xd3+

White's advantage is stable now because of the superiority of his centralized knight on d4 against Black's "bad" bishop. White can counter 18...f5 with 19.g4! and he has a strong attack, while the endgame after 19...♕f7 20.♕xf7+ ♖xf7 21.gxf5 exf5 22.♖hg1± is without any good prospects for Black.

19.♖xd3±



19...♕c4?

I do not understand the idea of this move. Black is clearly worse, so he must defend patiently; instead he is playing some unnecessarily active moves. He could have entered different lines of an endgame with heavy pieces and a pawn down, but White would have been much better in all variations: 19...fxe5 20.♘xe6 ♗xe6 21.♕xe6+ ♕f7 22.♕xe5! (the other possibility is not so clear 22.♕xf7+ ♔xf7! 23.fxe5 ♔e6) 22...♖ad8 (22...♕xf4+ 23.♕xf4 ♖xf4 24.♖xd5 ♖f2 25.♖d2±; 24...♖e8 25.♖d2±) 23.g3 d4!±, but still Black could have defended quietly with 19...♕f7⩲ or 19...♖a7± with a completely playable position.

20.♖hd1!?

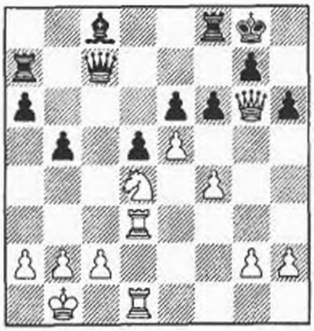
It turns out now that Black cannot capture on a2. White could have played simpler here – 20.♔b1 ♖a7 21.♖hd1, but it would only lead to a transposition of moves.

20...♖a7

20...♕xa2? 21.♖a3! ♕c4 22.♖g3 ♕c7 (22...♖a7? 23.exf6+–) 23.♕xh6, with a powerful attack for White.

21.♔b1 ♕c7

Black admits his mistake on move 19 – the queen has nothing to do on the c4 square.



22.f5!

This move is very energetic and strong too.

22...♕b6

White's attack is overwhelming after 22...exf5 23.e6→ – White deprives the black queen of the f7-square and prepares the decisive manoeuvre ♖h3-h6, for example: 23...f4 24.♖h3 ♔h8 25.♖h4! (25.♘f5? ♗xe6 26.♘xh6 ♗xh3–+), and Black is defenceless against 26.♘f5 followed by 27.♘h6. It is not good for Black to play 22...♕xe5 23.♘c6±. After 22...fxe5 23.♘xe6 ♗xe6 24.♕xe6+ ♕f7 25.♖xd5± the endgame is a bit similar to the one we saw earlier except that Black is even worse than before. Black's last chance to resist probably was 22...♕f7 23.♕xf7+ ♖axf7 24.fxe6 (24.♘xe6 ♗xe6 25.fxe6 ♖e7 26.♖xd5 ♖xe6 27.exf6 ♖exf6 28.c3±) 24...♖e7 25.exf6 ♖xf6±.

23.♖h3 fxe5 24.♖xh6!

White's attack is decisive now.

24...♖f6

24...exd4 25.♕h7+ ♔f7 26.f6! (26.fe? ♗xe6 27.♖f1+ ♔e8 28.♕g6+ ♖af7 29.♕xe6+ ♕xe6 30.♖xe6+ ♔d7 31.♖xf7+ ♖xf7 32.♖e1=) 26...♖g8 27.♖f1 ♕d8 28.♕g6+ ♔f8 29.fxg7+ ♔e7 30. ♕f7+ ♔d6 31.♕xa7+–.

25.♕e8+ ♖f8 26.♖h8+ ♔xh8 27.♕xf8+ ♔h7 28.♘f3+–

The rest of the game does not need any comments at all.

28...♕c7 29.fxe6 e4 30.♘g5+ ♔h6 31.h4 ♔h5 32.♕f5 g6 33.g4+ ♔xh4 34.♖h1+ ♔g3 35.♖g1+ ♔h4 36.♕f6 1–0

109 **D17**

Vallejo Pons – Kasparov

Round 6 28.02

Notes by S. Shipov

The intense fight in the opening and

the next stage led the game to an equal ending and a logical draw, despite the tremendous efforts of the adversaries to avoid that outcome.

1.♘f3

Fransisco obviously decided to be on the safe side after his loss on the previous day. It is possible and even necessary sometimes to fight against Kasparov in the Sicilian. One needs to be in at his best, however...!

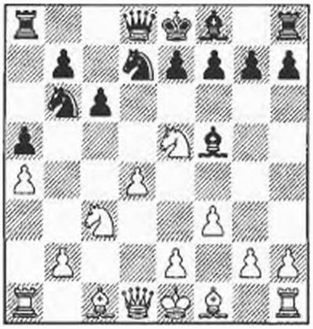
1...d5 2.d4 ♘f6 3.c4 c6 4.♘c3 dxc4 5.a4 ♗f5 6.♘e5 ♘bd7 7.♘xc4

The Slav Defence...

7...♘b6

...and a very rare line at that. Black usually plays here 7...♕c7 followed by e7-e5 later.

8.♘e5 a5 9.f3 ♘fd7!



We have often seen that line lately played by a Bosnian player with a Dutch passport – Ivan Sokolov. Black insists on exchanging a couple of knights in order to free his game.

10.e4

Ivan usually retreats to g6 with the bishop, but Garry obviously has his own theory in this line!

10...♘xe5!?

I found only two games in my database in this position.

11.dxe5

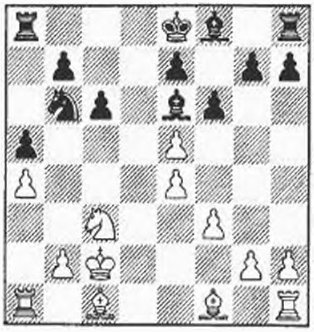
This move seems to lack any venom. White's chances to achieve an opening advantage in similar positions without queens are usually close to nil. Meanwhile the given position is definitely an exception to that rule. White should also consider here 11.exf5 – he is impeding Black's development by capturing the bishop. There might follow: 11...♘ed7 (11...♘ec4!? 12.♕b3 ♘d6) 12.♕b3 ♘f6 (12...g6!?) 13.♗e3 g6 14.d5! ♘bxd5 15.♘xd5 ♘xd5 16.♗d4?! (16.♕xb7!) 16...e5! and Black had a substantial advantage in the recent game Muhhamad – Kreiman, Seattle 2003.

11...♕xd1+ 12.♔xd1 ♗e6

Black does not need to check now, because the white king will have to go away from the d1-square anyway.

13.♔c2 f6

This is a novelty with which Black is trying to solve the problem of the development of the bishop on f8. White does not need to help him in that aspect at all! Black tried to do the same thing in the game Berczes – Carlsen, Heraklio 2002, by playing 13...♗c4 14.♗xc4 ♘xc4, but he was stopped dead in his tracks by the blocking sacrifice 15.e6! and White had a powerful initiative.



14.♖b1!

This excellent idea was an unpleasant surprise for the ex-world champion! White plans to open the b-file seizing the initiative on the queenside, while Black is busy with the problem how to eliminate his own e7-pawn.

14...fxe5

In case of 14...♘d7 White still plays 15.b4 ♘xe5 16.bxa5 ♗c8 and now after 17.a6! bxa6 18.a5! – White has a powerful pressure on the queenside just for a pawn. If 14...♘c4 15.♗xc4 ♗xc4, then 16.b3! and Black has some problems to find a suitable retreat for his bishop. After 16...♗f7 White has 17.b4, while in case of 16...♗a6 he should necessarily continue with 17.e6!.

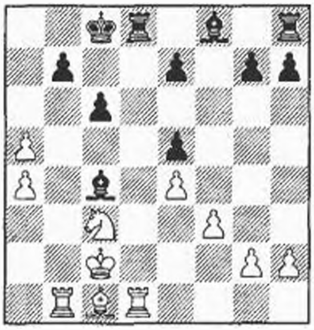
15.b4 ♘c4 16.♗xc4

White does not achieve any advantage after 16.bxa5 ♘xa5 17.♗e3 g6 18.♗b6 ♗c8!.

16...♗xc4 17.bxa5 0–0–0

In case of 17...♗a6 18.♗e3 e6 19.♖hd1 (or 19.♗b6) White's threat to penetrate with his rook to d7 is quite real indeed.

18.♖d1



18...♖xd1

The old wisdom says that it is always easy to sacrifice somebody else's material...Still I think that the exchange sacrifice: 18...♖d6 19.♗a3 ♔c7 deserves attention. Black has ~~a pawn~~, a bishop pair and a superior pawn structure and that seems to compensate the exchange amply.

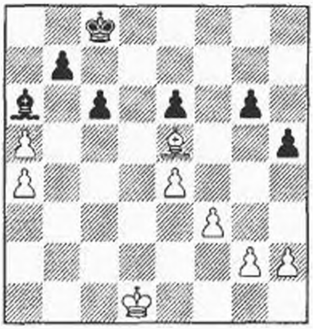
19.♘xd1 e6 20.♘e3 ♗a6 21.♘g4 ♗d6 22.♗b2

White wins a pawn indeed, but his doubled pawns at the edge of the board do not seem to be really valuable and Black has a bishop pair to brag about.

22...♖d8 23.♖d1 h5 24.♘xe5 ♗xe5

This is a sensible decision. Black's attempt to play for a win with 24...♗c7 might succeed only in case of a dismally weak play by his opponent. Black is a pawn down after all...

25.♗xe5 ♖xd1 26.♔xd1 g6

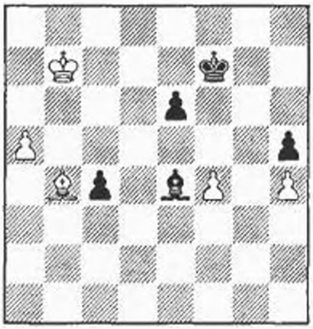


This opposite colours bishop endgame is definitely improbable to win for both players. Nevertheless they both tried to complicate it, but their efforts proved to be in vain despite their fighting valour.

27.♔d2 ♗f1 28.g4 ♗g2

Naturally Black does not need to exchange on g4, since that would only help White create a passed h-pawn on the kingside.

29.♔e3 c5 30.♗d6 c4 31.♗b4 ♔d7 32.gxh5 gxh5 33.f4 ♔e8 34.♔d4 ♔f7 35.♔e5 ♗f3 36.h4 ♗d1 37.♔d6 ♗xa4 38.♔c7 ♗c2 39.♔xb7 ♗xe4+



White now got a powerful passed pawn and he could win the black bishop for it. Black however is not obliged to just sit down and wait! His king will attack White's f4 and h4 pawns. The white bishop can defend them from the g5-square, but what about Black's passed c4-pawn? In fact Vallejo must play very carefully now.

40.♔b6 ♔g6 41.♔c5 ♔f5 ½ – ½

110 **B19**

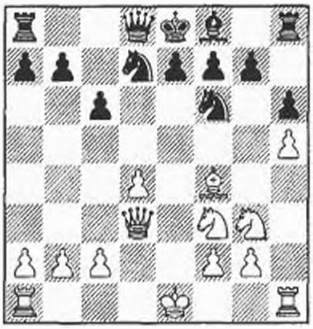
Kasparov – Anand

Round 7 1.03

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.♘d2 dxe4 4.♘xe4 ♗f5

This is the classical variation of the Caro-Kann Defence. Black develops his bishop outside of his pawn chain and usually exchanges it for its white counterpart. The simplifications facilitate his defence in general.

5.♘g3 ♗g6 6.h4 h6 7.♘f3 ♘d7 8.h5 ♗h7 9.♗d3 ♗xd3 10.♕xd3 ♘gf6 11.♗f4



11...e6

In case Black wishes to castle long he should play 11...♕a5+ 12.♗d2 ♕c7. The move in the game is usually connected with castling short and that might turn out to be quite risky (White has rather good prospects for a pawn-offence on that side of the board), nevertheless it is presently the most popular line for Black.

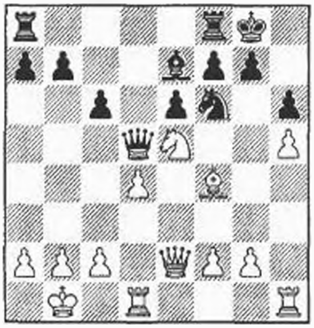
12.0–0–0 ♗e7 13.♔b1 0–0 14.♘e4

This move enables Black to simplify the position, but it prepares the logical attacking move g2-g4. Black can counter the other basic move for White 14.c4 with the standard reaction 14...b5 15.c5 (it is too dangerous for White to take that pawn, because then Black gets some open files against the white king) 15...♘d5, and the black knight is magnificently placed. On the other hand White avoids thus the simplifications and still preserves somewhat better chances. The line that Kasparov chose was considered to be relatively harmless for Black previous to that game.

14...♘xe4

Black's other possibility 14...♕a5 was leading to a sharper game. White could have countered that with 15.g4! ♘xg4 16.♘e5 and he would have a dangerous initiative for the pawn, because of the open g-file against the black king.

15.♕xe4 ♘f6 16.♕e2 ♕d5 17.♘e5



17...♕e4

This is Black's basic defensive idea. It is now unfavourable for White to avoid the trade of the queens (he has to play then either ♗e3 or ♕d2), so Black simplifies the position comfortably.

18.♕xe4 ♘xe4 19.♖he1

White repels the knight since the f2-pawn is indirectly protected.

19...♘f6

It is too bad here for Black to play 19...♘xf2? 20.♖d2 ♗h4 21.♖ee2±, because he loses material.

20.g4 ♖fd8 21.♗e3

This is a new move which stops c6-c5 presently and it looks like it is the only one that promises White good chances for a substantial advantage. White had tested in that position before 21.f3, 21.♖d3 and 21.c3, but Black usually managed to defend that endgame successfully after the immediate c6-c5.

21...♗d6

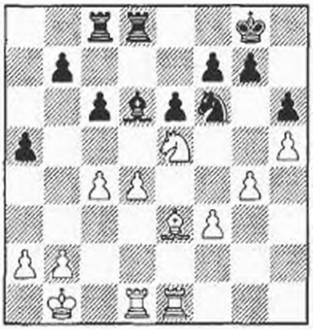
This is with the idea to prepare c6-c5 at some moment, because the knight on e5 is defended only by the d4-pawn and White would not be able to capture on c5.

22.f3 ♖ac8

Anand gives up the idea to play c6-c5 altogether, but instead he could have played that move immediately: 22...c5 23.♘c4 (this only seems to be the most dangerous line for Black, but probably White's best here is 23.c4 ♖ac8 24.b3±) 23...♗g3 24.♖g1 b5 25.♘a5 (or 25.♘a3 ♘d5 with almost the same ideas as in the main line) 25...♘d5 with the idea to play ♗f2 after the retreat of the white bishop and then capture the d4-pawn.

23.c4 a5

Black could have tried, just like on the previous move: 23...c5 24.b3 ♔f8 25.♗f2 cxd4 26.♗xd4 ♗b4 27.♖f1± – and White preserved a slight edge. Anand obviously prefers to play a position with a symmetrical pawn structure and only one open d-file, which is going to arise after a couple of moves.



24.a4

White fixes the enemy pawn on the same square as his bishop just in case of an eventual bishop and pawn endgame. The weakening of the b4-square is not so important, because the black bishop will hardly be useful there.

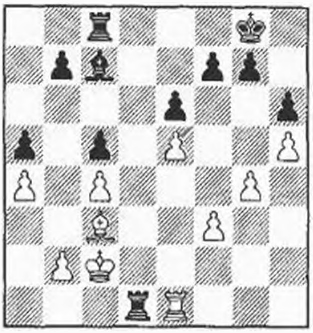
24...♘d7 25.♗d2 ♗c7 26.♗c3 ♘xe5 27.dxe5

So the pawn-structure has changed a bit. White preserves some advantage, because he has some extra space and a better bishop. The final result of the game hinges mostly on the quality of Black's defence now.

27...c5

If you have in mind what happened later in this game Black had better play the immediate 27...♖xd1+ 28.♖xd1 ♖d8 29.♖xd8+ ♗xd8⩲, and the endgame is evidently a draw. Anand wanted to go into a bishop and pawn endgame only after the queenside had been blocked in order to avoid the possibility for White to play b2-b4, followed by an eventual penetration of the white king on the queenside via the a5 and b6-squares.

28.♔c2 ♖xd1



29.♔xd1!

White's king has nothing to do on the queenside after c6-c5 and so he transfers it to the kingside, because there is a wonderful square for it there – e4! In case of 29.♖xd1 ♖d8 White needs to trade rooks to accomplish the same manoeuvre and that is not favourable for him, since his rook is more active than its counterpart.

29...♖d8+ 30.♔e2 ♖d7

This is good defending. Black intends to counter White's plan to push f4-f5 with activating of the bishop with ♗d8-g5.

31.f4

According to G.Kasparov White needed to centralize the king to e4 before the energetic march of the f-pawn, because the king would be very active in case of some complications after f4-f5-f6. Black manages now to defend successfully.

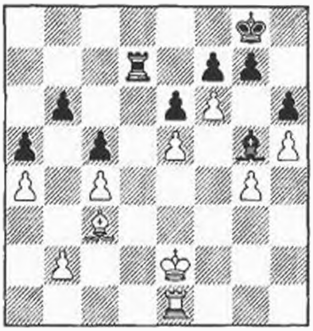
31...♗d8 32.f5

Just like before, 32.♔e3 would have been better, but Kasparov did not grasp the essence of Black's smart defence.

32...♗g5 33.f6

Now, 33.♔f3 does not work anymore, because of 33...♖d3+. It is not so good for White to play 33.♗xa5 ♖d4, because Black regains his pawn.

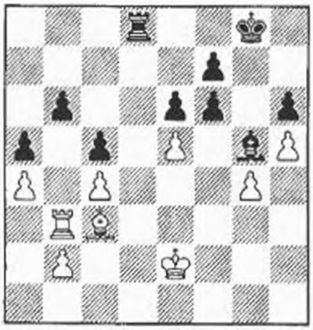
33...b6



34.♖a1

White cannot make any progress on the kingside (White simply cannot penetrate there if Black sits down doing nothing...) and so he tries to attack the b6-pawn with the rook via the b3-square. Meanwhile Black's defensive resources are quite enough to preserve the equality.

34...♖d8! 35.♖a3 gxf6 36.♖b3



36...♗f4!

This is the point behind Black's defensive idea. He now controls the e5-square and White needs to give away both his central pawns. Note that Black would not have had that resource with a white king on e4!

37.♖xb6

It is not good for White to play 37.exf6, because of 37...♖d6, followed by e6-e5 and ♖xf6 – that is why the bishop had to be on f4.

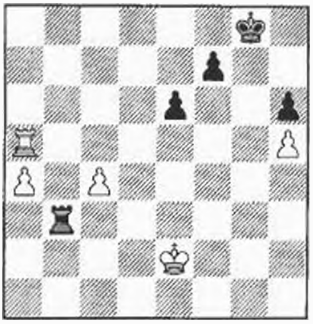
37...♗xe5

Black needs to activate the rook in order to defend successfully and he cannot accomplish this without the exchange of the bishops: 37...fxe5 38.♖c6+–, and White captures the pawns on a5 and c5.

38.♗xe5 fxe5 39.♖b5 ♖d4 40.♖xc5 ♖xg4 41.b3

White has no advantage at all after 41.♖xa5 ♖xc4 42.b3 ♖e4+ 43.♔d3 f5 – since Black's passed pawns are not weaker than White's pawns.

41...♖g3 42.♖xe5 ♖xb3 43.♖xa5



43...f5?!

This is probably the beginning of the series of imprecision by Black. The weakening of the e6-square will be important, therefore it was better for Black to play 43...♔f8 44.c5 ♖h3 45.c6 ♖c3 46.♖a8+ ♔e7 47.♖a7+ ♔f6 48.c7 ♔e5= with the idea to follow with ♔d6 – and the black king is just in time to stop White's passed a-pawn.

44.♖a8+ ♔g7 45.c5 ♖c3 46.♖c8 ♖a3

Anand continues to play passively. Meanwhile he should have activated his king immediately, for example: 46...♔f6! 47.a5 ♔e5 48.a6 ♖a3 49.♖a8 f4 50.a7 ♔e4 51.c6, and Black has 51...f3+ 52.♔f2 ♖a2+ 53.♔g3 ♖g2+ 54.♔h4 ♖g7 55.♖e8 ♖xa7 56.♖xe6+ ♔f4=, and the game should end in a draw. After 57.♖xh6 Black has 57...♖f7, and White must give away his c6-pawn to prevent Black from playing f2.

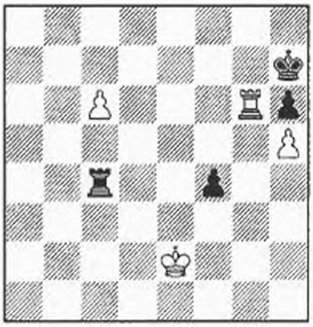
47.c6

That is White's last chance to try to win the game in view of his next move.

47...♖xa4 48.♖e8 ♖c4 49.♖xe6

Black must play very precisely now in order to make a draw, because his king is cut away.

49...f4 50.♖g6+ ♔h7



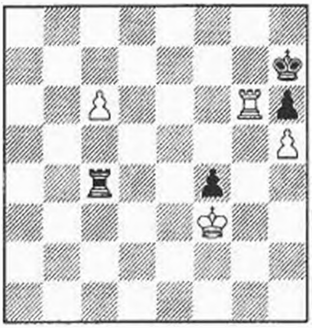
White now has two different plans to play for a win. The first one is to bring the king forward to the c6-pawn and to try to build a "bridge" (that is to place the king on c8 and the pawn on c7 and then to bring the king out of the shelter and to interpose with the rook against the checks by the black rook). The second plan is to put Black in a zugzwang and to capture the f4-pawn and later once again to push the c6-pawn forward, but this time in the absence of the black f4-pawn. We are going to see that neither plan promises White any success after a proper defence by Black.

51.♔d3 ♖c5 52.♔d4 ♖c1 53.♔e4

Or 53.♔d5 f3 54.♖f6 ♖c3 55.♔d6 (the line 55.♔e4 ♔g7 is an immediate draw; White also achieves nothing after 55. ♔d4 ♖c1) 55...♔g7 56.♖f5 ♖d3+ 57.♔e6 ♖e3+ 58.♔d7 ♖d3+ 59.♔c8 ♖e3 60.c7 ♖d3, and the game ends in a draw, because after White builds "a bridge" along the 5th rank Black manages to promote his pawn simultaneously with White i.e.: 61.♔b7 ♖b3+ 62.♔c6 ♖c3+ 63.♖c5 ♖xc5+ 64.♔xc5 f2 65.c8♕ f1♕=.

53...♖c4+ 54.♔d5 ♖c3 55.♔d4 ♖c1 56.♔e4 ♖c4+ 57.♔f3

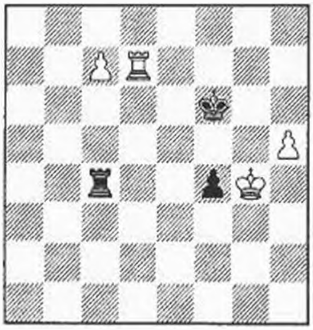
White is now testing the second plan.



57...♔h8?

This is Black's decisive mistake in this game. He is in a zugzwang indeed and loses one of his pawns, but he had the chance to capture the h5-pawn, losing his f4-pawn in the process and then make a draw thanks to the passed h-pawn: 57...♖c5! 58.♔xf4 ♖xh5 59. ♖e6 (White does not win after 59.♖d6 ♖c5 60.♔e4 h5 61.♔d4 ♖c1 62.♔d5 ♔g7=, and White must free the Black king along the 6th rank in order to promote his c-pawn and then Black makes an easy draw with his active king and his passed h5 pawn against White's rook.) 59...♔g7! (Black manages to come closer with his king) 60.♔e4 (or 60.♖e5 ♖h4+, followed by ♖c4) 60... ♔f7=, and White fails to promote his pawn.

58.♖xh6+ ♔g7 59.♖d6 ♔h7 60.♔g4 ♔g7 61.♖d7+ ♔f6 62.c7 1–0



Black resigned, since he is helpless against the march of the passed h-pawn, or the advance of the white king towards the passed c7-pawn after the exchange of the f and h-pawns. Kasparov said after that game "That was my worst win against Anand". The Indian grandmaster made plenty of mistakes while defending that endgame indeed. These mistakes might be understandable and forgivable for any and every player, but the best defender in the world had to save that endgame after all.

111 **B33**

Leko – Kramnik

Round 7 1.03

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 e5 6.♘db5 d6 7.♗g5 a6 8.♘a3 b5 9.♗xf6 gxf6 10.♘d5 f5 11.♗d3 ♗e6 12.0–0 ♗xd5 13.exd5 ♘e7

Kramnik defended this position three times in the super-tournaments of the year 2003. Shirov chose 14.c3 in Wijk aan Zee and Bologan played 14.♖e1 in Dortmund.

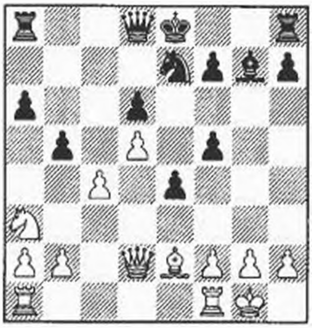
14.c4 e4 15.♗e2 ♗g7 16.♕d2

Leko demonstrated an improvement a month later: 16.♖b1 0–0 17.cxb5 axb5 18.♗xb5 ♗xb2 19.♘c4 ♗g7 20.a4 ♕c7 21.♕d2± Leko – Topalov, Monaco 2003.

(diagram)

16...b4

The idea to sacrifice this pawn belongs to GM Kuijf. Kramnik played much simpler when he was young: 16...bxc4 and after 17.♘xc4 0–0 18.♖ad1 ♖b8 19.♕f4 ♖b5! his counterplay was good enough, meanwhile his opponent blundered immediately with 20.♘e3? (20.♖d2! ♖xd5 21.♖xd5 ♘xd5 22.♕xd6 ♕a8!? 23.♖d1 ♖d8 24.♕g3= Kramnik) 20...♖xb2 21.♗c4 ♗e5! 22.♕g5+ ♔h8∓ Novik – Kramnik, USSR 1990.



17.♕xb4 ♖b8

Black can also go on playing without regaining his pawn, for example with 17...0–0 and his initiative is rather strong. The game Koch – C.Horvath, Bischwiller 1999, continued with 18.♖ab1 f4 19.♕d2 ♘g6 20.f3 e3 21.♕e1 ♕g5 22.♔h1 ♔h8 23.♘c2 ♗e5 24.♗d3 f5 25.♕e2 ♖f6 26.♖g1 ♖g8 27.b4 ♘h4 28.b5 ♖h6 and Black kept on attacking. White's play can be improved somehow, but it is much more enjoyable to play that position with Black!

18.♕a4+ ♔f8 19.♖ab1

White is not better at all after 19.c5, for example: 19...♘xd5 20.♗c4 dxc5 21.♖ad1 ♗d4 22.♘c2 ♘b6 23.♕xa6 ♔g7 24.b4 ♕f6 25.bxc5 ♗xc5 26.♗b3 f4 and Black had the initiative, Kosteniuk – Mikhalevski, Biel 2002.

19...♗xb2 20.♘c2

The game in which this line originated from continued with: 20.♕c2 ♗d4 21.♕d2 ♗c5 22.♕h6+ ♔e8 23.♗d1

♘g6 24.♗a4+ and White had the edge Nijboer – Kuijf, Netherlands 1991.

20...♘g6 21.♘b4 ♕f6 22.♘c6 ♖e8 23.f4 ♗d4+ 24.♔h1 ♔g7 25.♗h5 ♗c5 ½ – ½

The position is quite complex and dynamically balanced too. For example after 26.♖b7 (26.♕xa6?! ♖a8) Black can play 26...♕c3 and his counterplay after e3 and ♖e4 is rather dangerous for White.

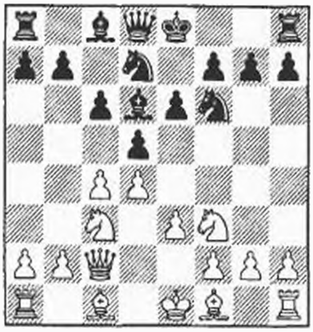
112 D45

Ponomariov – Vallejo Pons

Round 7 1.03

Notes by D. Yevseev

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.♘c3 e6 5.e3 ♘bd7 6.♕c2 ♗d6



7.g4!?

GM Alexander Shabalov invented that enterprising move some time ago. This pawn escapade looks pretty unusual, but it is becoming very fashionable nowadays. Plenty of leading grandmasters like Boris Gelfand, Mihal Krasenkow, Robert Kempinski and others have included it in their opening repertoire. Moreover, similar lines with an early g2-g4 move keep appearing in other openings as well, for example: 1.♘f3 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.g4!? – is a pet variation of GM Vadim Zvjaginsev, and quite recently we witnessed the absolutely extraordinary, but still quite interesting idea 1.e4 d6 2.d4 ♘f6 3.♘c3 e5 4.♘f3 ♘bd7 5.g4!!? ♘xg4 6.♖g1 ♘gf6 7.♗c4 h6 8.♗e3 c6 9.♕d3 ♕c7 10.0–0–0 etc., Shirov – Azmaiparashvili, Plovdiv 2003.

7...♗b4

Black's other possibilities are: 7...dxc4 and 7...h6.

8.♗d2 ♕e7 9.♗d3 e5 10.cxd5 ♗xc3 11.♗xc3 e4 12.dxc6 exd3

It is not good for Black to play 12...bxc6?! 13.g5 exd3 14.gxf6 ♕xf6 15.♕d1± Chabanon – Trabert, Italy 2003.

13.cxd7+ ♕xd7 14.♕b3!

After 14.♕xd3 Black has the powerful 14...♕d5!.

14...♕xg4

14...♕c6 15.d5 ♕xd5 16.♕xd5 ♘xd5 17.♗xg7 ♖g8 18.♗d4 ♗xg4 19.♖g1 ♔e7 (19...f6 20.♔d2 ♖c8 21.♘e1±) 20.♘e5 ♗f5 21.♔d2±.

15.♕d1 ♘e4

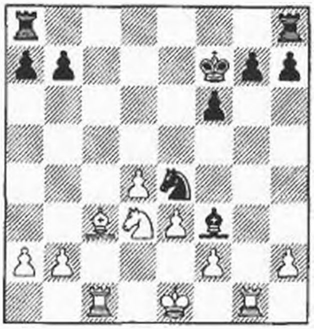
Black's decision to give up a pawn was arguable to say the least. 15...♕e4!?⇄ was interesting, as in the game Vorobiev – P.Smirnov, Krasnoyarsk 2003.

16.♘e5 ♕xd1+ 17.♖xd1 f6 18.♘xd3 ♗g4 19.♖c1 ♗f3 20.♖g1 ♔f7±

(diagram)

Black probably hoped to save this endgame with a pawn down, because of the bishops of opposite colour and the blockade on the light squares. It turned out to be not so simple, though...

21.♘c5 ♘d6

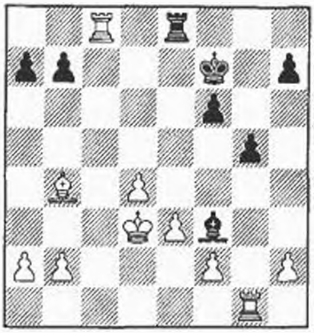


It was much better for Black to defend with 21...♘xc5 22.dxc5 g5±.

22.♘b3 ♘e4 23.♘d2 ♘xd2 24.♔xd2 g5 25.♔d3

White's main task is to set his central pawn mass moving. Naturally Black must prevent this...

25...♖he8 26.♗b4 ♖ac8 27.♖xc8



27...♗e4+

White's central pawns start moving after that intermediate move. R.Ponomariov and Razuvaev commented that game for the "Chess Informant" and they analysed the following lines: 27...♖xc8!? 28.e4 ♖e8 29.♖e1 f5! 30.e5 ♔e6 31.♖c1 ♗c6 32.♗d6 f4 33.♖c5 h5 34.b4 (34.♔c4 ♖c8!) 34...a6 35.a4 g4 36.b5 axb5 37.axb5 ♗d5 38.♖c7 h4⇄ and Black has a sufficient counterplay.

28.♔c2 ♖xc8 29.♗c3

Δf3, e4.

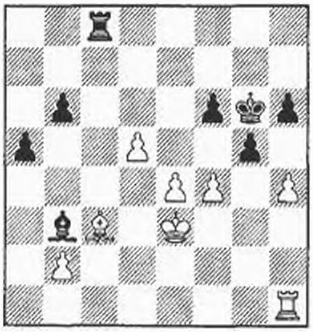
29...♗d5 30.f3!

White's a-pawn does not matter that much. In case of 30.a3 h6! (30...♗c4+ 31.♔d2 ♗d5; 31.♔f3!?) 31.f3 f5 Black manages to block White's pawns.

30...♗xa2 31.e4 a5 32.♖a1

32.♔e3 a4 Δ33...a3.

32...♗c4+ 33.♔e3 b6 34.d5 ♗b3 35.h4 h6 36.♖h1 ♔g6 37.f4!



37...gxf4+

Black could have played 37...g4, but it was not easy to recommend such a move. It was absolutely impossible to predict what was going to happen then and in principle it should be good for Black to reduce material, since he was fighting for a draw.

38.♔xf4 a4

Black is threatening 39...a3.

39.♖h3 ♗c2 40.♖h2 ♗b1 41.♖h1 ♗c2 42.♖c1

White's last moves were aimed at repelling the black bishop from the b1-h7 diagonal, because the immediate 42.♔e3 would be countered with 42...♖e8 or 42...a3!?.

42...♗b3 43.♔e3

White is threatening now to attack the f6-pawn: 44.♖g1+ ♔f7 45.♖f1.

43...f5

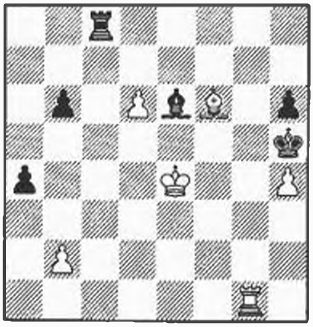
It deserved attention for Black

to play 43...♗c4!? outright, so that White's rook does not have the f1 square. Later the game could have proceeded in the similar fashion to the text: 44.♖c2!? (Δ45.♖g2+ ♔f7 46.♖f2; 44.♖g1+ ♔f7 45.♖g2?! a3! 46.bxa3 ♗xd5!=; 45.h5!?; 45.♗d4!?) 44...f5 45.♖g2+ ♔h5 (45...♔f7? 46.♖f2) 46.d6 fxe4 47.♗f6 and Black has the attractive additional possibility to play 47...♗b5 48.♖g7 (48.♖d2 ♗d7) 48...♖f8⇄ with some counterplay.

44.♖g1+ ♔h5 45.d6 fxe4 46.♗f6!

This is a crucial intermediate move. 46.♔xe4 a3! 47.♗f6 axb2!

46...♗e6 47.♔xe4



47...♖c2?

Despite White's energetic play in this endgame Black still had good drawing chances after the correct move 47...♖c5! (R.Ponomariov) 48.♖g7 ♗f5+! 49.♔d4 (49.♔f4 ♖d5) 49...♖c1 and White would not be able to improve his position because in case of 50.♔c5 (or 50.♔d5) Black had 50...♖c5+.

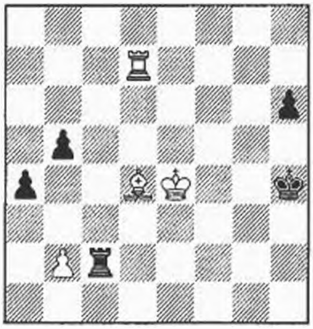
48.♗d4!

White cuts the enemy rook from the passed d-pawn.

48...b5 49.♖g7 ♔xh4

Black decided to sacrifice a piece, but unfortunately the endgame was lost for him. He would have hardly saved the game with a passive defence – 49...♖c8 50.♗f6 (White can also try 50.♗b6 ♖c6 51.♔e5!, but not 51.♗c7?! ♖c2 52.d7 ♗xd7 53.♖xd7 ♖xb2=) 50...♖f8 51.♔e5 ♖c8 52.♗e7 ♗d7 53.♔d5±, and Black would have to give his bishop for the passed d-pawn sooner or later.

50.d7 ♗xd7 51.♖xd7+–



51...♖c4

Black fails to exchange White's last remaining pawn with: 51...b4 52.♖b7 a3 53.b3+–.

52.♔d3 h5 53.♖d5 ♖b4 54.♗f6+ ♔g4 55.♖g5+ ♔f3 56.♖xh5 ♖b3+

Or 56...a3 57.bxa3 ♖b3+ 58.♔c2 ♖xa3 59.♖h3+– (R.Ponomariov)

57.♔c2 ♔e4 58.♗c3 ♔e3 59.♖h4 ♔f3 60.♖b4 ♖xb4 61.♗xb4 ♔e4 62.♔c3 ♔d5 63.♗f8 ♔c6 64.♔b4 ♔b6 65.♗e7 ♔c6 66.♗c5

It was simpler for White to play 66.♔a5+–.

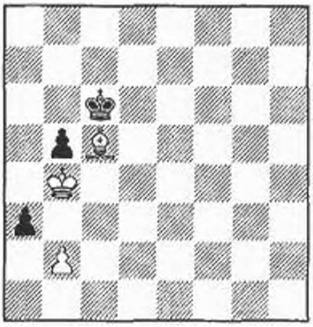
66...a3

(diagram)

67.b3

But of course not 67.bxa3??= because of the "wrong" corner of the pawn!

67...♔d5 68.♗f8 1–0



113 **C88**

Kasparov – Kramnik

Round 8 2.03

Notes by A. Khalifman

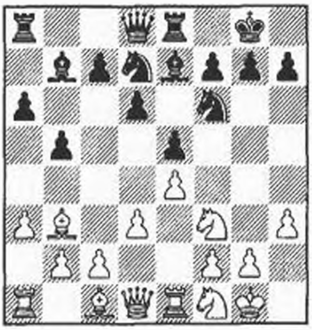
1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6

This choice of an opening is a bit unusual for Kramnik. He usually plays the "Berlin" defence 3...♘f6, and in general he played 1...c5 almost invariably in the year 2003.

4.♗a4 ♘f6 5.0–0 ♗e7 6.♖e1 b5 7.♗b3 0–0 8.h3

This anti-Marshall Attack variation is becoming increasingly popular lately.

8...♗b7 9.d3 d6 10.a3 ♘b8 11.♘bd2 ♘bd7 12.♘f1 ♖e8



13.♗a2!?N

The standard order of moves here is – 13.♘g3.

13...c6

This move does not look very nice (poor ♗b7!), but Black intends to play d6-d5 at some moment with the idea to neutralize the bishop on a2.

14.♘g3

White is back to his standard plan. This knight might become very dangerous at a certain moment.

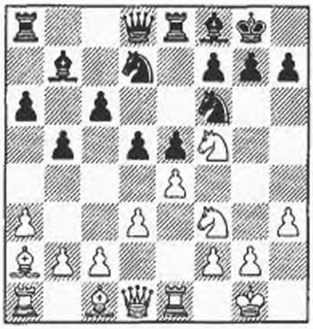
14...♗f8

The e5-pawn is protected now and Black has d6-d5 well prepared.

15.♘f5

White's alternative here was – 15.♘h2!? d5 16.♕f3↑, but Kasparov had something else in mind.

15...d5



16.d4!?

The move 13.♗a2 was evidently played with this possibility in mind. White lost a tempo for prophylactic against ♘c5 instead of the typical manoeuvre of the knight to g4 via h2 as it was played before.

16...c5!

This is Black's best. It is too bad for him to play 16...♘xe4? 17.♖xe4 dxe4 18.♘g5+– as well as 16...exd4? 17.e5 ♘e4 18.♖xe4! dxe4 19.♘g5+–. Meanwhile it was quite possible for him to try 16...g6 17.♘h6+ (the position is quite unclear after 17.exd5 gxf5 18.dxc6 ♗xc6 19.♘g5 ♗d5 20.♗xd5 ♘xd5 21.♕h5 ♘7f6 22.♕xf7+ ♔h8 23.♖xe5) 17...♗xh6 18.♗xh6 ♘xe4 19.♖xe4 dxe4 20.♘g5 ♖e7 21.♘xe4↑ – but White regains the exchange and preserves some initiative.

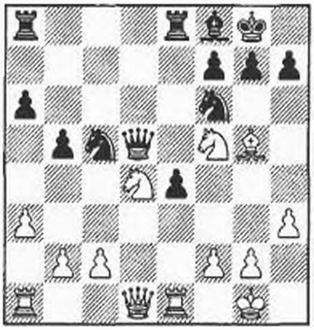
17.dxc5 ♘xc5

Black was losing after 17...♘xe4? 18.♖xe4! dxe4 19.♘g5.

18.exd5 e4 19.♘3d4

It was considered for a period of an year, between Linares 2003 and Linares 2004, that White had to play here 19.♘h2 ♘xd5 (19...♗xd5 20.♘g4 ♗xa2 21.♕xd8 ♖axd8 22.♘xf6+ gxf6 23.♖xa2 ♖d5 24.g4± with a slight but stable advantage.) 20.♘g4↑ Kasparov's analysis ended here with an evaluation “White has the initiative”. In the game Kasparov – Shirov, Linares 2004, Black managed to prove that after 20...h5! 21.♘ge3 (the sacrifice does not work for White: 21.♘gh6+ gxh6 22.♕xh5 ♕f6 23.♗xh6 ♖e5−+) 21...♘f4 he was not worse at all. Following the moves: 22.b4 ♘a4 23.♕xd8 ♖axd8 24.g3 ♘xh3+ 25.♔g2 ♘g5, White had to fight for a draw. So it looks like the idea 16.d4 is not promising White any advantage whatsoever.

19...♗xd5 20.♗xd5 ♕xd5 21.♗g5



21...♘fd7!

This move is more active than 21...♘cd7. The position is very complicated. White has concentrated his light pieces on the kingside, while Black has good prospects to dominate in the centre.

22.♕g4

It was safer for White to play 22.♗e3=.

22...♘e5

Black could have provoked an immediate crisis in that game with the move 22...h5!? 23.♕xh5 (the retreat of the white queen leads to an advantage for Black – 23.♕g3 ♖e5! 24.b4 ♘a4∓) 23...g6 24.♕h4 (Black can counter 24.♕g4 with 24...gxf5 25.♘xf5 ♘e5 26.♕g3 ♘f3+! 27.gxf3 ♕xf5 28.♗e3+ ♕g6−+, and White's attack is down and out...) 24...gxf5 25.♖ad1 ♕e5 26.♖e3. Kramnik evaluates this position as “unclear”. Meanwhile Black can play 26...♕h8 27.♕g3 (after the exchange of the queens White's couple of pawns are not enough to compensate the piece...) 27...♕h5!, defending successfully. It is of course not possible to calculate everything precisely to the end in a competitive game, so Kramnik's tentative move is easily understandable.

23.♕g3 ♘e6 24.♖ad1 ♘xg5

That is the right time to get rid of this bishop.

25.♕xg5 ♕b7 26.♘g3

Black's e4-pawn is the new target for White's attack.

26...♘c4 27.♘df5 ♖e6

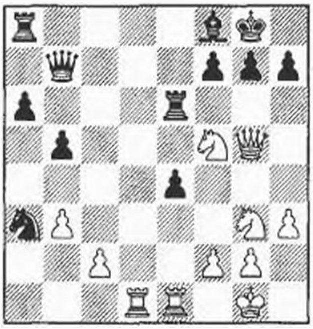
This is a solid defensive move. Black could have tried instead: 27...♘xb2 28.♖d4 ♘c4 29.♘xe4 (or 29.♖dxe4 f6 30.♕g4 ♖xe4 31.♘xe4 ♔h8) 29...♖e6∞

– and White would have nothing decisive on the kingside.

28.b3

Black has defended everything successfully and Kasparov is prudently forcing a draw in view of the oncoming time-trouble...

28...♘xa3



29.♖xe4! ♖xe4

It is also too dangerous for Black to try to avoid the draw with: 29...♘xc2?! 30.♖xe6 fxe6 31.♘h6+! ♔h8 32.♕e5→, and suddenly he is in trouble – White is threatening ♕xe6 as well as ♘e4. For example after 32...♖e8 33.♘e4 Black is helpless against the threat ♘g5+−.

30.♘xe4 ♕xe4 31.♘h6+ ♔h8 32.♘xf7+ ♔g8 33.♘h6+ ♔h8 ½ – ½

This was a good fighting game. Garry played quite enterprisingly in the opening (16.d4), but Vladimir found excellent defensive resources.

114 **C12**

Leko – Radjabov

Round 8 2.03

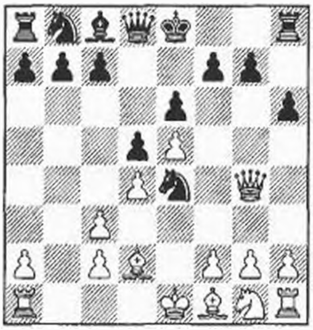
Notes by A. Bezgodov

This game makes a great impression. The sharp and enterprising play of both opponents, inspired by courage and confidence in their skill, cannot leave anybody indifferent. Without fearing the home preparation of his very young, but nevertheless powerful opponent, Peter Leko chose one of the most intricate systems in the French Defence and was the first to demonstrate a strong novelty.

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.♗g5 ♗b4

The McCutcheon. The reciprocal pins of the knights make the price of every inaccurate move even higher than usual.

5.e5 h6 6.♗d2 ♗xc3 7.bxc3 ♘e4 8.♕g4



8...g6

For many years the supporters of this variation were racking their brains over whether it is better for them to give up castling or to weaken their kingside pawns irreversibly. Nowadays Black players almost always make the move played by Teimour Radjabov and hide the king on the queenside...if they manage to get that far. In this game too, even after castling, the black king has a lot of problems. 8...♔f8 9.♗d3 ♘xd2 10.♔xd2±. The naive move 8...♘xd2?? won't do at all because of

9.♕xg7+−.

9.♗d3 ♘xd2 10.♔xd2

It is not easy to exploit White's king position here. Still, with a little good luck, Black can do it.

10...c5 11.h4!

Only forward! White has no time for "classic" development; he should dash after the enemy king.

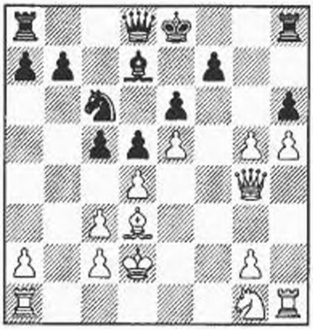
11...♗d7

From here the bishop can be placed on c6 if needed (or even on a4) and the knight on d7. The simple 11...♘c6 is possible too, but 11...h5?! is a positional mistake in view of 12.♕f4± and Black is deprived of counterplay forever because of the incurable weakness of his dark squares.

12.h5 g5

What else is left to do?!

13.f4! ♘c6 14.fxg5



14...♕a5!?

Radjabov does not accept entering into an inferior endgame; he tries to storm White's position!

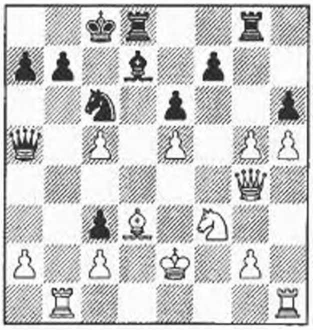
14...♕xg5+ 15.♕xg5 hxg5 16.♔e3±.

15.dxc5!N

This novelty, which responds to the demands of the whole position, is the result of Leko's home preparation. Either side can fall into trouble with just one inaccuracy. 15.g6?! 0–0–0∓ is not only harmless for Black but it is hazardous for White. Now comes an admirable chain of reciprocal strong blows:

15...d4 16.♘f3 0–0–0 17.♖ab1 dxc3+ 18.♔e2 ♖hg8!

The time to harvest the pawns has not yet come: 18...♕xc5? 19.♖b5 ♘d4+ 20.♕xd4 ♕xd4 21.♘xd4 ♗xb5 22.♘xb5+−. White needs to exercise a maximum of self-control, as there are a lot of tempting variations and Black's strong counterplay is far from being obvious.



19.♕e4?!

The only moment in the whole game when Leko probably does not choose the best move. Continuing the attack with gain of tempo looks murderous: 19.♖b3!!, e.g.: 19...f5 (19...hxg5 20.♖hb1 ♕xc5 21.♖xb7+−) 20.exf6 e5 21.♗f5+−.

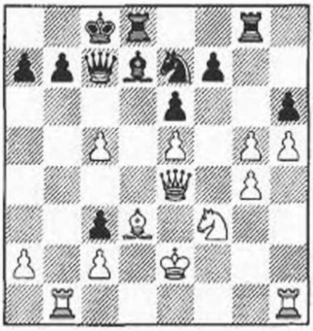
19...♕c7!

Radjabov energetically takes advantage of White's hesitation. Leko must have thought he would neutralize his opponent's counterplay after 19...hxg5 20.g4!+− (but not 20.h6? g4 21.♘d4 ♕xc5 22.♘b5 f5! 23.exf6 a6−+).

20.g4!

Leko hurries to correct his inaccuracy. The initiative would go entirely to Black after 20.gxh6? ♖xg2+ 21.♔f1 f5 22.♕e1 (22.♕e3 ♖g3↑) 22...♖g4⇄. The wonderful contest in combinative skills continues!

20...♘e7!



21.♗b5!

Leko sees a serious danger and hurries to suppress the black bishop, which threatens to become too powerful. At least it does not risk putting White in danger of defeat. Very bad looks 21.gxh6?! ♗c6 22.♕f4 ♗xf3+ 23.♕xf3 ♘c6=∞ when Black's attack has no impediments.

21...hxg5!

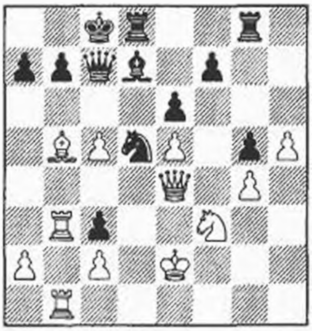
Perfect! Radjabov seizes a pawn at just the appropriate moment, exactly when it is necessary. Weak is 21...♗c6? 22.♗xc6 ♕xc6 23.♕xc6+ ♘xc6 24.♖b3 ♖d4 25.♘xd4 ♘xd4+ 26.♔e3 ♘xb3 27.gxh6 ♘xc5 28.g5 ♘d7 29.h7 ♖h8 30.g6+−.

22.♖b3 ♘d5!

The knight has become too strong, as it can be when supported by a "newborn" g5-pawn! 22...♗xb5+ 23.♖xb5 ♘d5 24.♖hb1 b6 25.♔f2±.

23.♖hb1

An extremely important point in the game! Taking advantage of White's hesitation, which I've mentioned above, Radjabov could manage to draw!



23...♗c6?

At this very moment – an error in return! The very efficient advance 23...f5!! would have rescued Black 24.exf6 (24.gxf5? exf5→) 24...♘xf6 and White must be careful, moreover, he has no winning chances. 25.♕c4 (25.♕e5 ♕xe5+ 26.♘xe5 ♗xb5+ 27.♖xb5 ♖d2+ 28.♔f3 ♘d7 29.♘xd7 ♔xd7 30.♖xb7+ ♔c6=∞; 25.♕a4 ♕g3 26.♗xd7+ ♖xd7 27.♖g1?? ♖d2+ 28.♘xd2 ♕h2−+; 27.c6 ♖d2+ 28.♘xd2 ♕h2+ 29.♔f1 ♕h1=) 25...♕g3 26.♖g1 (26.♗xd7+ ♖xd7 27.♖g1 ♖d2+ 28.♘xd2 ♕h2+ 29.♔f1 cxd2 30.♕xe6+ ♔b8 31.♕e2 d1♕+ 32.♕xd1 ♘e4 33.♕d4 ♖e8 34.♖xb7+ ♔xb7 35.♕d7+ ♔a6 36.♕a4+ ♔b7 37.♕d7=) 26...♗xb5 27.♖xb5 ♖d2+ 28.♘xd2 ♕xg1 29.♕xe6+ ♔b8 30.♘e4 ♕g2+ 31.♔e3 ♕g1+ 32.♔e2 ♕g2= Leko could have paid a high price for his inaccuracy on the 19th move!

24.♗xc6+−

Now we can talk of White's decisive advantage. Radjabov does not get a second "present" from Leko.

24...♕xc6 25.♘d4 ♕a6+

25...♘f4+ 26.♔f3+−.

26.♔e1 ♖d7 27.c6 ♖c7 28.♖xb7

There are several paths to victory. 28.♘b5 bxc6 29.♘xc7 ♔xc7 30.♕h7 ♖f8 31.♕g7+–.

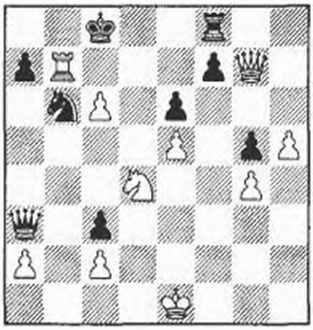
28...♖xb7 29.♖xb7 ♘b6 30.♕h7

More exquisite is 30.♘f5!!

30...♖f8 31.♕g7

And here "not bad" is 31.♘f5! but Leko wanted to sacrifice the queen. It's his right!

31...♕a3



32.♕xf8+! ♕xf8 33.♘b5 1–0

Each of the players committed only one inaccuracy – that is not much for such a savage battle. This game shows that the formerly cautious Peter Leko we once knew has been left far in the past. Today, Leko is a fearless fighter, who is ready to run any risk for Victory.

115 **B30**

Ponomariov – Anand

Round 8 2.03

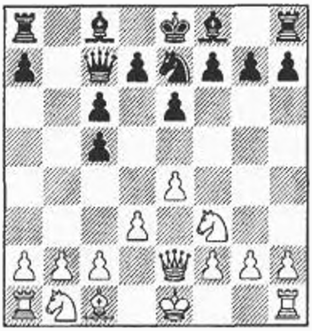
1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 e6

This move is new for the tournament (!) and it is more aggressive than the solid line 3...g6.

4.♗xc6

That is a relatively fashionable line. White is not in a hurry to castle and waits to see what Black intends to do later.

4...bxc6 5.d3 ♘e7 6.♕e2 ♕c7



7.♘g5

Anand played 7.♘c3 here in order to move the other knight to g5 only after 7...♘g6 (as he did against Grischuk in Wijk aan Zee 2003). It is probably better for White to play 7.♘h4 – see the notes to the 7th move in the game Anand – Grischuk, Wijk aan Zee.

7...h6N

This is new – Lautier played 7...e5 (against Marcelin, France 2003).

8.♘h3 g6

Black should avoid weakening his position too much with 8...g5?! – since after 9.f4 White has a clear advantage.

9.f4 ♗g7 10.c4

10.e5!? was really interesting.

10...e5

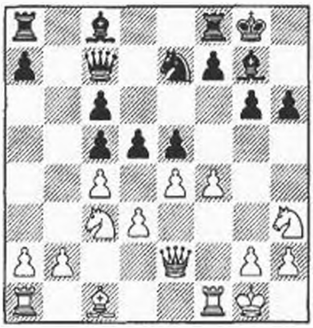
Anand stops the possibility of White playing e4-e5 now.

11.♘c3 d5

It's getting more and more complicated.

12.0–0 0–0

There were plenty of other options of course, but both players preferred to complete their development first.



13.g4!?

Naturally White wants to avoid the doubling of his pawns after the possible ♗xh3, and the rest of the sensible moves like ♕f3 or ♘f2 would have enabled Black to equalize easily.

13...exf4

Anand did not let White push f4-f5, but was this move the best? If not, then it was at least the most solid – all so typical for Vishy!

14.♗xf4

White had to consider more seriously here 14.♘xf4 with the idea to centralize the knight.

14...♕d7 15.exd5?

I do not understand why White improves Black's pawn structure. 15.♘f2 must be recommended as the better alternative.

15...cxd5 16.♖ae1?!

One cannot help feeling that Ruslan has lost control over the position.

16...♘c6?

This is a very strange decision. Why not 16...dxc4! first? After 17.dxc4 17...♕xg4+ 18.♕xg4 ♗xg4∓ White would have plenty of problems to solve. It is of course stronger for White to play 17.♘f2, but still after 17...♖e8 18.dxc4 ♗b7 the position of the white king is quite vulnerable.

17.♘xd5 ♘d4 18.♕g2 ♕xg4

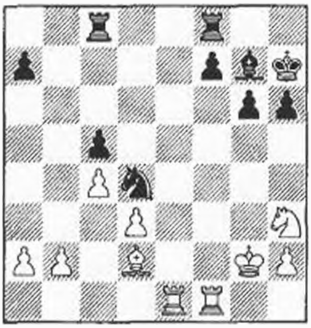
This might still be good for Black, although without White's pawn on d3 it would have been even better.

19.♘e7+

This move was a clever choice between many possibilities. The resulting endgame must be about equal, although maybe slightly worse for White. After 19.♗d6 ♕xh3 20.♘e7+ ♔h7 21.♕xa8 ♘c2, Black would have excellent compensation for the exchange.

19...♔h7 20.♘xc8 ♕xg2+ 21.♔xg2 ♖axc8 22.♗d2

22.♖e7 would have been more reliable. White's attempt to win a pawn seems rather dubious after: 22.♗d6?! ♖fd8 23.♗e7?! ♖d7 24.♖xf7 ♔g8 (in case of 24...♘f5 25.♘f4 ♔g8 26.♖xg7+ ♔xg7 27.♗xc5 g5 28.♘e6+ ♔f7 29.d4 ♘xd4 30.♗xd4 ♖d6 31.♘xg5+ hxg5 32.♗xa7 ♖d2+ 33.♔g3 ♖xc4, White's chances to save the game are considerable) 25.♖f4 ♘f5 26.♖fe4 ♔f7 27.♗h4 ♖xd3∓. White will lose either the b2-pawn or the a2-pawn.



22...g5!?

This move is quite risky (because of 23.♖e7), but ambitious as well. Black's pawns are ready to advance now. 22...♘c6!? was more solid. It looked like both players were extremely nervous.

23.♖e7 ♔g6 24.♖xa7 ♘e6

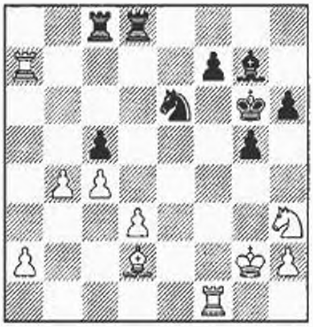
24...f5 was also possible. Note that, Ponomariov's knight is out of play again. Do you remember his game against Kasparov?

25.b4

White must now show his trump cards.

25...♖fd8!?

Anand attacks his opponent's main weakness. 25...♗d4! would have provided Black with a good compensation for the pawn, because if 26.b5 (26.bxc5 ♖a8!) then 26...♖a8! and it was not good for White to play 27.♖fxf7 because of 27...g4.



26.b5

It is not comfortable for White to defend the pawn with 26.♖f3 because of: 26...♗e5! (26...g4? 27.♘f4+ ♘xf4+ 28.♖xf4 ♖xd3 29.♖xg4+ ♔f5 30.♖f4+ ♔g6 31.♗c1 ♗d4 32.♖d7±) 27.♘f2 ♗f4 28.♗c3 cxb4 29.♗xb4 ♖a8 30.♖xa8 ♖xa8∞ and Black's chances are not worse at all.

26...♖xd3 27.♗c1 ♖cd8

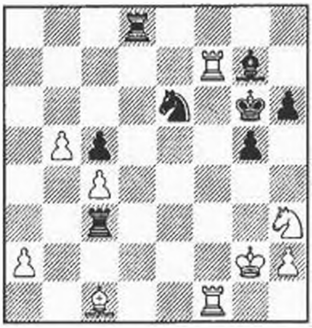
27...♖c3!?.

28.♖axf7

After 28.♖fxf7 Black was clearly better, for example 28...♖c3 29.♖fe7 ♖d6 30.♖a6 ♔f6!? 31.♖e8 ♖xa6 32.bxa6 ♖xc1 33.a7 ♘c7 34.♖c8 ♖xc4 35.♖xc7 ♖a4 36.♘f2 ♔g6∓.

28...♖c3

Why not the same move a bit earlier?



29.♖e7

It was hardly possible to calculate correctly the consequences of the pawn sacrifice 29.a4!? in the time-trouble, but intuition might tell that the position would have become even more complicated and unclear, for example: 29...♖xc4 (29...♖dd3? 30.♖e7! ♘d4 31.♘f2 ♖c2 32.a5±) 30.a5 g4 31.♘g1 ♘d4 32.b6 ♖a4∞.

29...♖d6

White's pieces are quite discoordinated and his queenside pawns are not so important for the outcome of the game.

30.♘f2 ♗f6

30...♖xc4!?.

31.♖e8 ♖c2

Black is threatening to win a piece after 32...♗d4.

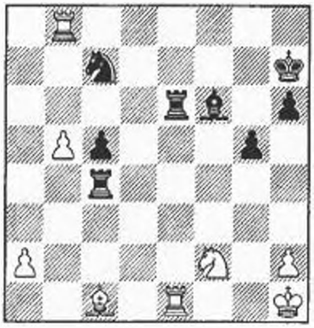
32.♔h1 ♖xc4 33.♖e1?!

It was better for White to play 33.♖a8 with the idea to prepare the advance of the passed a and b-pawns.

33...♘c7 34.♖g8+ ♔h7?!

Why not 34...♔f5!? 35.♖f1 ♘xb5!.

35.♖b8 ♖e6



36.♖f1?

Ruslan compensates Black's mistake immediately with a mistake of his own. He had to find the best for White 36.♗d2! and after 36...♖xe1+ 37.♗xe1 ♘d5 (37...♖c1? 38.♘d3 ♖d1 39.♖b7 ♔g6 40.♖xc7± Anand) 38.♖b7+ White preserves the equality, for example: 38...♔g6 39.♖d7 ♘b6 40.♖d6 ♘a4 41.♗a5 ♖c1+ 42.♔g2 ♔f5 (42...♖b1?? 43.♗d8) 43.♗c7 ♖b1 44.b6∞ or 38...♗g7!? 39.♖d7 ♘b6 (39...♖c1? 40.♘d3 ♖d1 41.♖xd5 c4 42.♔g2 cxd3 43.♗b4±) 40.♖d6 ♖c1 41.♖d1=.

36...♘d5

Anand is playing superbly whenever he dominates positionally!

37.♖c8 ♗d4 38.♘g4

This is losing outright but White's position was very bad anyway.

38...h5 39.♖d8

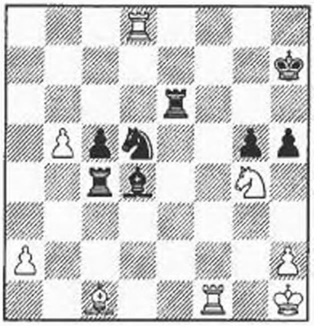
39.♘f2 ♗xf2–+.

(diagram)

39...♘f4?

39...♘b6! was winning immediately 40.♘e3 ♗xe3 41.♗xe3 ♖xe3 42.♖d6 ♘c8! 43.♖d7+ ♔g6 44.b6 ♖b4 45.b7 ♘e7 (Anand).

40.♗xf4 gxf4 41.♘f2 ♖c3!



Vishy definitely didn't like the line further in the text and did not want to let White play ♘h3. This excellent resource could have helped him win the game which had to be won much easier before. 41...♖c2 42.♘h3 ♖ee2 43.♘g5+ ♔g6 44.♘f3 ♖xa2 might have been also winning for Black, but Vishy's technique was very-very far from perfect that day. Meanwhile after: 45.b6 ♖ab2 46.b7 ♖xb7 47.♘xd4 cxd4 48.♖xd4 ♖bb2 49.♖g1+ ♔f5 50.♖d5+ ♔e4 51.♖xh5 the outcome of the game would have been far from clear...

42.♖f8

42.a4 ♖f3 43.a5. Can these pawns save the game? No, not at all. Black wins easily: 43...♖xf2 44.♖xf2 ♗xf2 45.♔g2 (45.b6 f3!–+) 45...♗h4 46.♖d5 ♔g6 47.♖xc5 ♖e3 48.b6? f3–+.

42...♖c2 43.♖xf4 ♖ee2

43...♖xa2 44.♘e4.

44.b6!

This must have been White's only chance to unpin the knight. 44.♔g2 ♖xa2 45.b6 ♖ab2–+.

44...♗xf2?! ½ – ½

Now it's just a draw. Vishy had to try 44...♖xa2 and he still had some chances. I don't want to criticize my colleagues, but there were just too many mistakes in this game... 45.b7

♖ab2 46.♖f7+ ♔g6 47.♖f8 ♖xb7 48.♘d3 ♖a2 49.♘f4∓ (Anand).
(Comments based on the Internet live coverage by A.Khalifman)

116 **C67**

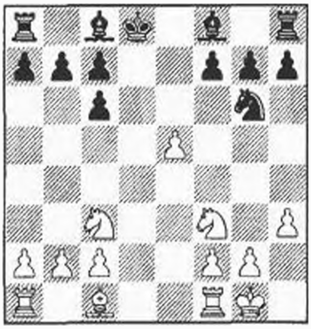
Anand – Vallejo Pons

Round 9 3.03

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 ♘f6 4. 0–0 ♘xe4 5.d4 ♘d6 6.♗xc6 dxc6 7.dxe5 ♘f5 8.♕xd8+ ♔xd8 9.♘c3 ♘e7

This manoeuvre was introduced in practice by the Hungarian GM Z.Almasi in the year 1996. The black knight is placed on f5 quite well and beautifully too, but it is constantly under the threat of g2-g4. Black is redeploying it to g6 and loses a couple of tempi as well, but all that is absolutely reasonable. It attacks the e5 pawn from g6 and has the option to go to f4 at some point. Black plans to play h6 and ♗e6 and he can place his dark-squared bishop on b4 or e7. It will be unfavourable for White to push g2-g4 (without winning any tempo), because of the undermining move h7-h5, so the only way for him to show some activity on the kingside will be to push f2-f4. This advance of the f-pawn might be advantageous for White, but it might have some drawbacks as well. The a7-g1 diagonal will be weakened and if Black manages to block that pawn on f5 – the white dark-squared bishop will become weak too. Last but not least if White wants to push the f-pawn he will need to remove his knight on f3 somewhere and the e5-pawn will be defenceless then. We must also add that Vallejo tried that line three times in Linares 2002 – and he had a good game against Anand, while against Shirov and Adams his positions were dubious.

10.h3 ♘g6



11.♗g5+

This is one of the possible ways for White to fight for an advantage. He is trying to use Black's lag in development in order to force him to exchange the dark-squared bishops. Thus Black is deprived of one of his main trumps in that position – his pair of bishops.

11...♔e8 12.♖ad1 ♗d7

In the game Ivanchuk – Shirov, Monte Carlo 1998, Black failed to equalize after: 12...♗e6 13.♘d4 ♗b4 14.♘xe6 fxe6 15.♘e4 ♘xe5 16.♗f4 ♘f7 17.♗xc7 ♖c8 18.♗g3± and White had a slight but stable advantage due to Black's weakness on e6. Vallejo Pons with Black against Shirov in his game in Linares 2002 played 12...♗e7, but after 13.♗xe7 ♔xe7 14.♘d4! ♘f4 (it is too perilous for Black to play 14...♘xe5 15.♖fe1 ♔f6 16.b3 because his king will be very vulnerable) 15.♘e4± ♖d8 16.♖fe1 ♖d5 17.c4!? ♖d8 (the move 17...♖xe5!? cannot be refuted outright...) 18.♔h2 a5 19.g4 a4 20.♔g3

♘e6 21.♘f5+ ♔f8 22.f4 he was totally squeezed to the last two ranks.

13.♖d2

White has also tried here 13.♘d4, but with the dark-squared bishops present on the board, that move was not as effective as in the game Shirov – Vallejo: 13...h6 14.♗e3 ♗b4 (the trade of this bishop for the knight on c3 is quite typical for that line) 15.f4 ♗xc3 16.bxc3 c5 17.♘e2 b6 18.♘g3 h5 19.f5 (otherwise Black plays h4 and ♗f5) 19...♘xe5 20.♗f4 f6 21.♖fe1 ♗a4, and the opponents agreed to a draw Shirov – Almasi, Monaco 2002.

13...♗e6

This is F.Vallejo's novelty. Black used to play here before only 13...♗e7 14.♗xe7 ♔xe7 15.♘d4 with the idea to follow with f4 and an initiative. It is wrong for Black to try 13...h6 14.♖fd1 hxg5 15.♖xd7 ♗d6 16.e6. After the immediate 13...♗b4 White has the powerful 14.♖fd1 ♘f8 15.e6! (this is another quite standard idea for the Berlin variation) 15...fxe6 16.♘e5, and White cramps his opponent completely at the expense of only a pawn.

14.♖fd1

If White tries here to play just like in the game Ivanchuk – Shirov, Monte Carlo 1998, 14.♘d4, then it is good for Black to counter with 14...h6 (but not immediately 14...♗b4 because of 15.♖fd1 and White has some checkmating threats, for example: 15...♘xe5 16.♘db5 f6 17.♘xc7+ ♔e7 18.♘xa8± and White remains with an extra exchange) 15.♗e3 ♗b4 followed by a trade on c3. It becomes clear now that the loss of a tempo for ♗d7 is only an illusion, since the white rook on d2 becomes pinned. This is the essence of the purposeful novelty of Vallejo Pons.

14...♗e7 15.♘e4

Black's bishop is already on e6, so he can counter 15.♗xe7 ♔xe7 16.♘d4 with the simple 16...♖ad8 threatening to capture the e5-pawn.

15...♗d5

This is the correct reaction. White cannot defend that knight comfortably, since he will have to remove a rook away from the open file and the knight has nowhere to go.

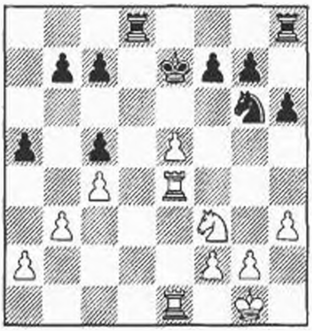
16.♖e1 ♗xg5 17.♘exg5 h6 18.♘e4 ♖d8 19.b3 a5

It was also very good for Black to play 19...♔e7 immediately.

20.♖d4 ♔e7 21.c4 ♗xe4 22.♖dxe4

It is not any better for White to play 22.♖exe4 c5 23.♖xd8 ♖xd8, and Black's rook has occupied the only open file, so he is at least equal. White understood here that he had no advantage whatsoever so decided to go for the draw and did that quite convincingly.

22...c5



23.e6

I believe that White already envisaged what was going to happen at the end of the game.

23...f5 24.♖4e3 ♖hf8 25.a4 ♖f6

26.♘e5 ♘xe5 27.♖xe5 b6 28.f4 ½ – ½

A draw was agreed to since after 28...♖d6 followed by a total exchange on e6, White places a pawn on g3 and the black king cannot penetrate at all, because White's position is a fortress. This was Anand's idea to draw that he started with his move 23.

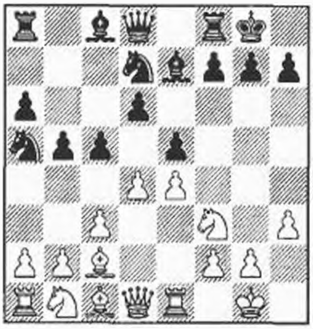
117 C96

Kramnik – Ponomariov

Round 9 3.03

Notes by M. Notkin

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗a4 ♘f6 5.0–0 ♗e7 6.♖e1 b5 7.♗b3 d6 8.c3 0–0 9.h3 ♘a5 10.♗c2 c5 11.d4 ♘d7



A well-known position. The database contains almost 500 games with different plans for White. But Kramnik's next move has never been made before!

12.♔h1!?

As a rule White plays 12.dxc5 dxc5 13.♘bd2 here, sending the knight to d5 or he plays first 12.♘bd2 when Black's common counterplay consists of 12...cxd4 13.cxd4 ♘c6. At the Russia vs Rest of the World match in the Kremlin against Ponomariov, Kasparov opted for 12.b3 then after 12...cxd4 13.cxd4 ♘c6 gave his knight a good post on c3 – 14.♘c3 (Kramnik's idea is the same but he doesn't want to weaken the a1-h8 diagonal.) Let's look at the Kasparov – Ponomariov continuation: 14...exd4 15.♘d5 ♘de5 16.♘xd4 ♘xd4 17.♕xd4 ♗f6 with tactical counterchances. Without b2-b3 the situation would be even more favourable for White, therefore Black should find something else.

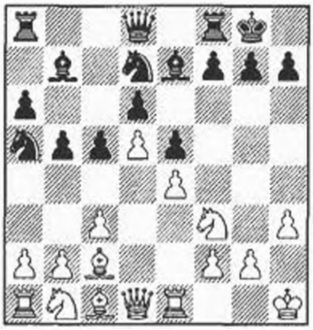
But the choice isn't rich. The most logical is

12...♗b7

In case of 12...♗f6 White plays 13.d5 planning a standard attack on the kingside – g2-g4, ♘d2-f1–g3-f5. Here the move ♔h1 turns out to be very useful as it frees the square for the rook. The same advance follows after 12...♗b7.

13.d5

Notice that after the immediate 12.d5 the bishop never goes to b7 but stays on c8 supporting f7-f5.



13...f5!?

Trying to break free at once. In case of 13...♘c4 White could carry out the above-mentioned plan – 14.g4 and so on. Black could have found himself in a passive position as it would have been difficult to prepare f7-f5, e.g. 14...g6 15.b3 ♘cb6 16.♗h6 ♖e8 17.♖g1.

14.exf5

By staying on b1 instead of moving immediately to d2 the knight doesn't interfere with the queen's protection of the d5-pawn, so Black needs to spend some time to regain it.

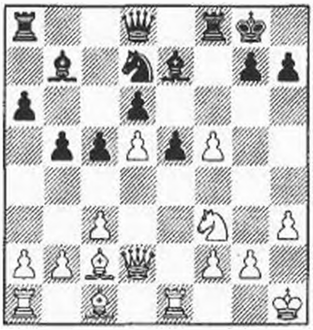
14...♘c4

If 14...♘f6 then 15.♘g5 and the knight goes directly to e6 as in Kramnik's favourite King's Indian line with 9.b4. Ponomariov was unable to delay this manoeuvre for long though.

15.♘bd2 ♘xd2

15...♘cb6 came into consideration. After 16.♘e4 ♗xd5 17.♘eg5 ♘f6 Black will have to trade his light-squared bishop for the knight, but his knights take close control of the central squares.

16.♕xd2



16...♘f6

In the event of 16...♘b6 White can hang on to the pawn – 17.♗e4!.

17.♘g5 ♗xd5 18.f4!

Kramnik is trying to open the e-file. When protected from behind the pawn which will soon appear on e6 will be more dangerous.

18...♕c7

Kramnik points out 18...♕d7!? where after 19.fxe5 dxe5 20.♖xe5 ♖ad8 Black has compensation for the pawn thanks to his advantage in development.

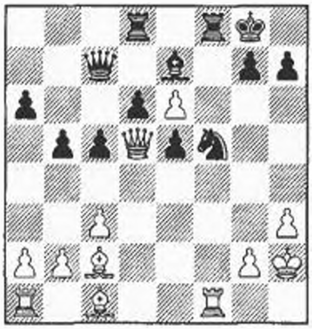
19.♘e6 ♗xe6 20.fxe6 ♘h5!

This looks risky as the d5 square becomes available for the white queen, but otherwise Black can't hope for counterplay.

21.♕d5 ♖ad8

Intending to capture on f4 with a piece. 21...♘f6 is senseless due to 22.♕f3. After 21...♘xf4 22.♗xf4 exf4 White plays 23.♖e4 reinforcing the position gradually (because the hasty 23.♕h5 g6 24.♗xg6 hxg6 25.♕xg6+ ♔h8 gives only a perpetual).

22.f5! ♘g3+ 23.♔h2 ♘xf5 24.♖f1



24...♘h4!

Again the best defence. After 24...g6 25.g4 an interesting trick follows: 25...♘d4!? (25...♘g7 26.♗h6 is dismal) 26.♖xf8+ ♖xf8 27.cxd4 ♖f2+ 28.♔g1 ♖xc2 leading to a position where by means of the precise move 29.♗h6! White creates decisive threats along the f-file, for example 29...♕d8 (29...cxd4 30.♕f3) 30.♕f3 ♕e8 31.♖f1+–.

25.♗g5

The quiet 25.♗e3 deserves attention too with idea to play a2-a4 at an opportune moment; another reasonable option is 25.♖f7 ♖xf7 26.exf7+ and after 26...♔f8 (⌓26...♔h8) 27.♗xh7 ♗f6 28.g3! the knight is trapped.

25...♘g6!

Worse is 25...♔h8 26.♗xh4 ♗xh4 27.♕e4 g5 28.g3! d5 29.♕g4 e4 30.♔g2 winning the bishop.

26.h4 ♘f4?!

The knight has made five moves in a row! Safer was 26...♖xf1 27.♖xf1 ♖f8. Then after 28.♖f7 (28.♖xf8+ ♘xf8∞; 28.♗xg6 ♖xf1 29.♗f7+ ♖xf7! 30.exf7+ ♔f8 31.♕e6? ♕d8) 28...♖xf7 29.exf7+ ♔f8 the f7-pawn is not as dangerous as it looks.

27.♗xf4 exf4

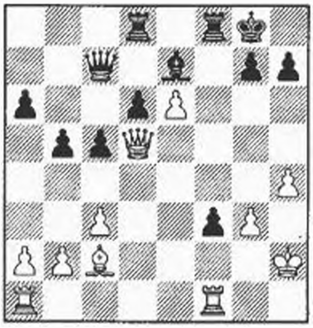
27...♖xf4 28.♖xf4 exf4 29.h5! followed by ♕f5 (or e4, or d3) gives White a serious attack.

28.g3!

Now Black was ready to meet 28.h5 with 28...♖f6 29.♕e4 g6 (or even 29...♖h6). 28.♕h5 g6 29.♗xg6 hxg6 30.♕xg6+ ♔h8=.

28...f3

If 28...fxg3+ 29.♔xg3 then with the open files on the kingside the idea of ♕h5 is much more efficient.



29.♖xf3?

Missing the advantage. After 29.h5! ♖f6 (The best resource, discovered by Kramnik, is 29...f2! 30.♕d3 g6 31.hxg6 ♖f6 32.gxh7+ ♔h8.) 30.♖xf3 ♖df8 (30...♖xf3 31.♕xf3 ♖f8 32.♕d3+–) 31.♖af1 ♖xf3 32.♖xf3 ♖xf3 33.♕xf3 ♗f6 34.♕e4 White gains a pawn and still has good winning chances.

29...♖xf3 30.♕xf3 ♖f8 31.♕d3 g6 32.♖f1

White already has to be cautious. The careless 32.h5? loses to 32...♖f2+ 33.♔g1 (33.♔h3 c4 34.♕d1 ♕c6) 33...c4! 34.♕d1 (34.♕e4 d5!) 34...♕c5.

32...♕c8 33.♖xf8+ ½ – ½

118 **D28**

Radjabov – Kasparov

Round 9 3.03

This game focuses on an interesting psychological point. Kasparov lost in the first round against the same player a very dramatic game in which he was almost winning. He obviously decided to refrain from exceedingly active and impulsive actions in this game and played definitely scholarly and was not afraid of exchanges and an eventual draw.

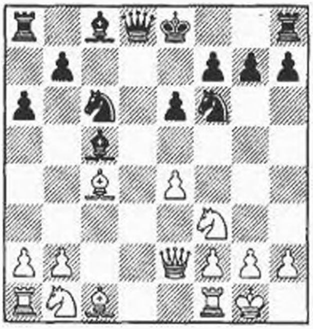
1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4

The Queen's Gambit Accepted enjoys the reputation as one of the most reliable openings for Black.

3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.e3 e6 5.♗xc4 c5 6.♕e2 a6 7.dxc5

That move is the essence of the idea of this order of moves for White to play ♕e2 before castling. White avoids the exchange of queens and plays a middle game with the typical for the Queen's Gambit Accepted symmetrical pawn structure without the c and d-pawns. White maintains some initiative in principle, but Black has good chances to simplify the position and draw.

7...♗xc5 8.0–0 ♘c6 9.e4



White is trying to utilize his right to begin the game by starting active actions as early as possible.

He has two basic plans in this position.

1. He can push his e-pawn to e5 and use the weakness of the d6-square in order to play eventually on the kingside.
2. He can exert pressure on the queenside with the idea to dominate on the c-file and to occupy the c5-square.

Black must play very precisely right now, coming out of the opening, so that he can preserve the balance.

9...b5

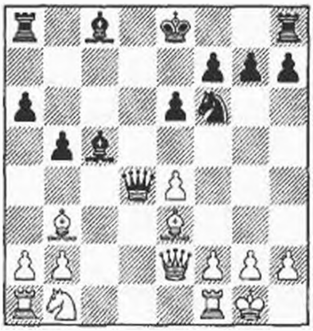
This move weakens the queenside indeed, but on the other hand it secures the b7-square for the development of his bishop.

10.♗b3 ♘d4

That quite concrete move became popular in the middle of the 90ies of the last century. Black evidently wants to exploit the weakness of the d4 square, but the queen is quite exposed at the middle of the board. Black's other basic possibility – 10...e5 has a significant drawback – it weakens the d5-square.

11.♘xd4 ♕xd4 12.♗e3

After 12.♘c3 Black managed to equalize in numerous games played in the 90ies with the move 12...♕e5, with the idea to stop e4-e5 for a while and eventually to try to exchange queens on the h5-square, for example: 13.♗e3 ♗xe3 14.♕xe3 ♘g4=, and after the trade of the queens on g3 the position became rather drawish in the game I.Sokolov – Van Wely, Groningen 1995.



12...♕e5

Is it possible for Black to capture the e4-pawn? The answer to that question according to the tournament practice is negative: 12...♕xe4 13.♘d2 ♕f5 14.g4 (White must deflect the queen from the defence of the bishop on c5.) 14...♕e5 (After 14...♘xg4 15.♗xc5 ♗b7 16.♖fe1 ♖d8, Lesiege – Krush, Bermuda 2002, Black has no compensation for his material losses after the correct move for White 17.♖ad1!.) 15.♘f3 ♕e4 16.♘g5 ♕c6 17.♖ac1 ♗b7 18.f3 ♗xe3+

19.♕xe3 ♕d6. Now it looks like Black is safe, but the sacrifice: 20.♘xe6! fxe6 21.♗xe6 secures a big advantage for White: 21...♔f8 (It is even worse for Black to play 21...♕e7 22.♖fe1 with the powerful threats of bishop checks from d7 or f7.) 22.♖fd1 ♕e7 23.g5 Timman – Lautier, Ubeda 1997, and Black cannot retreat the knight: 23...♘d5 24.♖xd5 ♗xd5 25.♕f4+ ♔e8 26.♗xd5 because White is threatening to checkmate soon, so Black must give back the extra piece. His position then remains clearly worse because his king on e8 isolates the rook on h8 away from the actions.

13.♗xc5 ♕xc5

Now comes the critical moment, whether White will manage to take advantage of the exposed placement of the black queen on c5, or not. He can try to occupy the c5-square with his knight, or he can also attempt to push e4-e5 and manoeuvre the knight to e4 and d6. Should he fail to do that (as it happened in this game) he must forget about an opening edge.

14.♘c3

White does not achieve much after 14.e5 ♘d7 15.♖e1 ♗b7 16.♘d2 0–0 17.♖ac1 ♕b6=, and he will not succeed to place his knight on e4, firstly because the e5-pawn is hanging and secondly because even if White defends his e5-pawn somehow, Black will exchange that knight the moment it appears on e4. White has not too many active ideas in fact. Also equal is 14.♘d2!? ♗b7 15.e5 ♘d7 16.♖fe1 ♖d8 17.♘f1 0–0 18.♖ac1 ♕d4! 19.♖c3 ♘b6=.

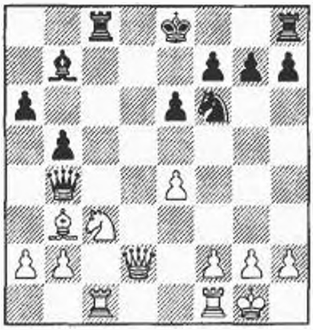
14...♗b7 15.♖ac1

It looks like White missed his chance to create real problems for Black at that particular moment of the game as well as during the next few moves. GM Huzman recommended here 15.♖ad1!? (with the idea to deprive the knight on f6 of the d7 square after 15...0–0 16.e5, and contrary to the game controlling the e4-square), for example: 15...0–0 16.e5 ♕c6 17.f4 ♘d7 18.♖d6↑, and White occupies the d-file and maintains his initiative: 18...♕c7 19.♗c2 ♖fd8 20.♕d3 ♘f8 21.♖d1± or 15...b4 16.♘a4 ♕b5 17.♕e3 0–0 (Black cannot capture on e4, because of ♘b6 threatening ♘xa8 and ♗a4) 18.♘c5± and Black has some problems to worry about, because of White's powerful knight.

15...♖c8 16.♕d2

White defends the rook on c1 threatening ♘d5.

16...♕b4



17.♖fd1

White now probably missed his last chance to fight for an advantage with 17.e5!? ♘d7 18.♖fd1! ♘c5 (the point is that White wins after 18...♘xe5 19.f4+–) 19.♗c2 (White fails to achieve much after 19.♘xb5 ♕xb5 20.♖xc5 ♕xc5 21.♕d7+ ♔f8 22.♕xb7 g6, and White's first rank is weak as well as the f2-pawn and therefore his bishop and two pawns for the rook are not good enough.) 19...0–0 20.♘d5 ♕xd2 21.♘e7+ ♔h8 22.♖xd2 ♖c7 (22...♖cd8 23.♖d6) 23.♗d1 ♖xe7 24.♖xc5± – and White manages to occupy the c5-square (recommended by Huzman).

17...0–0 18.f3

White has no advantage after 18.e5 due to 18...♘e4 19.♕f4 a5 20.♘xe4 ♕xe4 21.♕xe4 ♗xe4=.

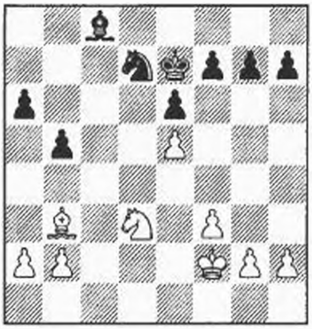
18...♖c7

Black secures the d7-square for the eventual retreat of his knight after White pushes e4-e5.

19.♘e2

This was essentially a silent draw offer because of the forced mass-reduction of material, but White had nothing better anyway.

19...♕xd2 20.♖xd2 ♖xc1+ 21.♘xc1 ♖c8 22.♖c2 ♘d7 23.♘d3 ♔f8 24.♔f2 ♔e7 25.♖xc8 ♗xc8 26.e5



26...f6

Black forces White to exchange his advanced e5-pawn, otherwise he might remain with a bad bishop.

27.exf6+

Black counters 27.f4 with 27...♗b7, and White must exchange on f6 anyway, because of the threat ♗e4.

27...gxf6 28.f4 a5 29.♔e3 h6 30.a3 ♔d6 31.g4 e5 32.h4 exf4+ 33.♔xf4 ♘c5

Black exchanges the knights and the draw becomes a fact of life.

34.♗c2 ♘xd3+ 35.♗xd3 b4 36.axb4 axb4 37.♗f5 ♗b7 38.♗c2 ♗c8 39.♗f5 ♗b7 ½ – ½

All black pawns are on dark squares and his light-squared bishop controls the only possible square for penetration – f5 easily.

119 **B30**

Kasparov – Leko

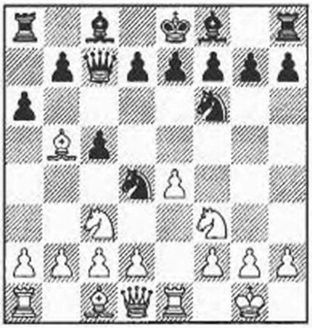
Round 10 5.03

Kasparov decided to avoid the theoretical discussions in the Cheliabinsk variation in this game and preferred a line in which his opponent was already defeated once in this tournament – in the game with Anand.

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.♗b5 ♕c7 5.0–0 ♘d4 6.♖e1

So Garry doesn't follow Anand's recipe 6.♘xd4 cxd4 7.♘d5 – maybe he knows it better.

6...a6



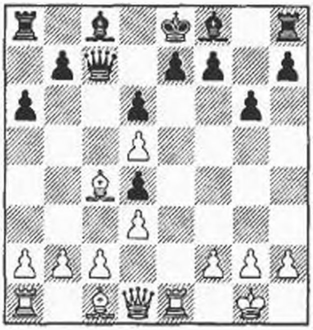
7.♗c4! d6N

This is a new idea. The move 7...e6 was played in the game Jansa – Mrva, CSSR 1992. It is not good for Black because of 8.e5! d5 9.exf6 dxc4, and despite the pair of bishops Black will have problems to shelter his king in the middlegame, for example: 10.d3 gxf6 11.♘d5 ♕d8 12.dxc4. If Black plays 7...b5, White can counter that with 8.♘d5!.

8.♘d5 ♘xd5 9.exd5 g6

This solid move was played after some long thinking over the board by Leko, but I believed that Garry and Co. must have considered it beforehand. After 9...♗g4 10.♗e2 ♘xe2+ 11.♕xe2, Black still had some problems to solve with his development, for example 11...g6 12.d4 cxd4 13.♗g5 ♖c8 14.♕e4 ♗xf3 15.♕xf3 h6 (15...♕xc2?? 16.♕f6+-) 16.♗f6 ♖h7 17.♖e2, and White would preserve some annoying pressure.

10.♘xd4 cxd4 11.d3



11...h6!

Black is hardly happy with playing that move, but ♗c1–g5 is too much of a threat. Actually, the more I look at this position, the more I dislike Black. This line is not quite suitable for a World Championship match for sure...!

12.b4

12.♗f4 ♗g7 13.♕d2 would have caused more problems for Black.

12...♗g7 13.♕e2

This is just another way to prevent Black from castling. It might be good as well – see my previous comments.

13...♗f6 14.♕f3

White is advancing step by step, but after 14...♔f8 that move looks a bit strange. Did Garry miss something?

14...♔f8 15.♗b2

No, he didn't! He just changed the target – now Black's d4-pawn was in danger.

15...♕b6 16.a3

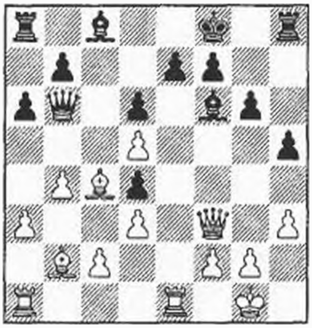
This move is too slow and maybe a bit sadistic too. According to Garry it was worth for White to play 16.♕f4!? g5 (16...♗f5 17.a4) 17.♕e4 ♔g7 18.a4 a5 19.b5 ♗d7 (19...♗e5 20.f4 f5 21.♕f3 ♗f6 22.♖e2↑) 20.f4↑.

16...h5

Black intends to play soon h5-h4, followed by ♖h5 with an excellent position.

17.h3

This is played with the same cautious approach. The deflection sacrifice does not work 17.h4? ♗xh4 18.♕f4 ♗f6, and White does not have the tactical strike 19.♖xe7?, because of 19...♗xe7 20.♗xd4 ♗g5!–+ (Kasparov).



17...h4!

It is now getting harder and harder to make use of Black's weaknesses. Maybe Garry forgot about playing matches against a defensive genius like Karpov? Bravo, Peter! So my previous assessment turned out to be enlightenment: despite all 12.♗f4 was more than necessary – the d4-pawn proved not to be a real weakness.

18.♕f4

Or 18.♖e4!? ♗f5 19.♖f4 ♖h5 (19...♗e5 20.♖xf5 gxf5 21.♕xf5±) 20.♖e1 ♗e5 21.♕xh5! gxh5 22.♖xf5± (Kasparov).

18...♗f5

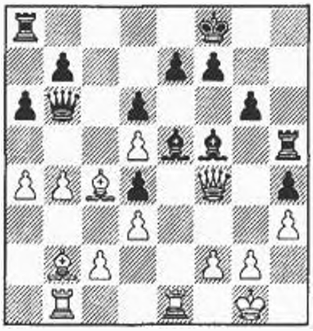
So is White better after all? What he could have done differently remains unclear. After 18...♖h5? he was winning a pawn with 19.♖e4±.

19.♖ab1!?

White is planning to push 20.a4 and to be able to counter 20...a5 with 21.ba.

19...♖h5 20.a4 ♗e5

After 20...a5 White preserves his advantage: 21.bxa5 ♕c5 (21...♕xa5? 22.♗xd4) 22.a6 bxa6 23.♗a1± (Kasparov).



21.♕f3?!

Garry considers to have lost his advantage with this move and thinks that he should have played instead: 21.♕d2! ♖c8 22.a5 ♕a7 23.f4 (23.c3!?) 23...♗f6 24.♕f2± (Kasparov).

21...♖c8

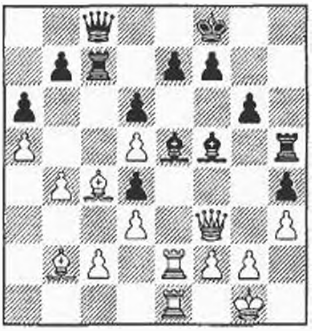
Why not 21...a5?

22.a5 ♕d8 23.♖e2 ♖c7

This battle of nerves must be decided in the time-trouble now.

24.♖be1 ♕c8

24...f6 25.♖e4! ♗xe4 26.♖xe4 ♕d7 27.♗b3 (27.♗xd4 ♗xd4 28.♖xd4 ♕a4) 27...♕f5 28.♕d1=/∞ (Kasparov).



25.♖xe5!

This is possibly White's only chance to play for a win. 25.♗b3 f6∓ Δ♔g7, ♖h8, g5-g4 (Kasparov).

25...dxe5 26.♖xe5

If now White only manages to capture one more pawn comfortably with 27.♗xd4 it would be a delight but...

26...♖xc4!

Peter did not need to think a lot over this possibility.

27.dxc4 ♕xc4

The situation has changed, but the assessment of the position has not yet. Black is still slightly worse, but he should be able to hold the position.

28.♖e2?!

Garry found later in his home analysis some additional resources in this position. It is still a draw after a precise defence, though... 28.b5!? axb5 (28...f6?! 29.bxa6! ♕xa6 30.♖e1 ♕xa5 31.♕e2 ♖h7 32.♗xd4 ♕xd5 33.♗xf6±; 29...bxa6 30.d6! fxe5? 31.d7+−; 30...exd6 31.♖e1→) 29.♕f4 (29.a6!? bxa6 30.♕a3 b4 31.♕a5 ♔e8! 32.d6 ♗e6 33.dxe7 ♔xe7 34.♖xh5 gxh5 35.♕b6=) 29...f6 30.♖e1 ♔f7 31.d6 e5 32.♕f3 e4 (32...♕c6? 33.♕xc6 bxc6 34.♗xd4!±) 33.♖xe4 (33.♕d1∞) 33...♗xe4 34.♕xe4 ♖e5 35.♕xb7+ ♔e6∞ (Kasparov).

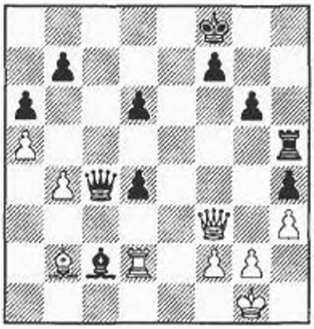
28...♗xc2

Or 28...f6?! 29.♗a3 d3 30.cxd3 ♗xd3 31.b5! ♖f5 32.♕e3→ (Kasparov).

29.d6

After 29.♖d2 ♖xd5, White can save the game with the elegant tactical strike: 30.♕xd5! ♕xd5 31.♖xd4 ♕xd4 32.♗xd4.

29...exd6 30.♖d2



30...d3?

This move was aggressive enough, but still not the best. 30...♕b3! was enough for a draw in a somewhat better position. 31.♕xb3 ♗xb3 32.♖xd4 ♔e7∓.

31.♕xb7 ♖f5 32.♕d7 f6 33.♕xd6+ ♔f7 ½ – ½

Kasparov's chances to win the Linares tournament after that game were very slim indeed...

(Comments based on the Internet live coverage by A.Khalifman)

120 B30

Ponomariov – Radjabov

Round 10 5.03

That encounter proved to be a real derby in order to avoid the last place in the tournament.

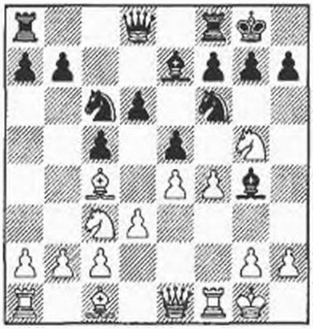
1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♘c3

This is the modern contemporary way to prevent the Sveshnikov variation.

3...e5 4.♗c4 ♗e7 5.d3 d6 6.0–0 ♘f6 7.♘g5 0–0 8.f4 ♗g4

8...exf4 9.♗xf4 was more popular before, but Black had some problems there as well, for example 9...h6 10.♘f3 ♗e6 11.♘d5 ♗xd5 12.exd5 ♘a5 13.♘h4 etc. – as in the game Kramnik – Leko, Linares 2003.

9.♕e1



9...exf4

It is too dangerous for Black to play 9...♘d4, because of 10.fxe5 dxe5 11.♕h4 threatening 14.♖xf6 or 14.♘xf7.

10.♗xf4 ♘d4 11.♕d2 ♕d7 12.h3

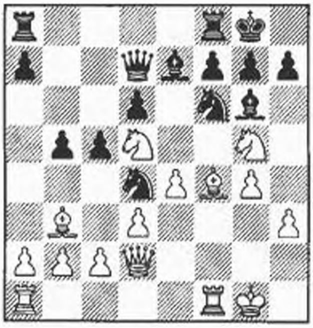
Presently, the retreat of the bishop

12.♗e3 creates more problems for Black; see for example the game Bologan – Ragjabov, Dortmund 2003.

12...♗h5 13.g4N

This novelty is hardly worth repeating. The black bishop on g6 is quite comfortable. The strange move 13.♔h2 was tried in the game Nikolenko – Neverov, Prague 1992.

13...♗g6 14.♘d5 b5 15.♗b3



15...♗d8!

Despite being bad, this bishop is still worth something. This move might turn out to be multi-purpose in some lines. Meanwhile 16...♘xb3 has already become a real threat. Well, Teimour, why did you not play 1...c5 before?

16.♖ae1?

Black's manoeuvre ♗e7-d8-f6 was not so dangerous after all... It was correct for White to play 16.♘xf6+ ♗xf6 17.♗d5 h6! 18.♘f3 ♘xf3+ 19.♖xf3 ♗xb2 20.♖af1 ♗d4+ 21.♔h1 ♖ae8 22.♕g2=∞ (Ponomariov).

16...♘xb3

Black has plenty of good and safe options now, but does he have an advantage for example after: 16...h6 17.♘f3 ♘xb3 18.axb3 ♘xd5 19.exd5 ♗f6?.

17.axb3 ♘xd5 18.exd5 ♗f6∓

Black can be happy now about the opening, while White should fight for a draw in this position. Ruslan must do something about the move order 1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6, or just quit playing 1.e4 altogether?!

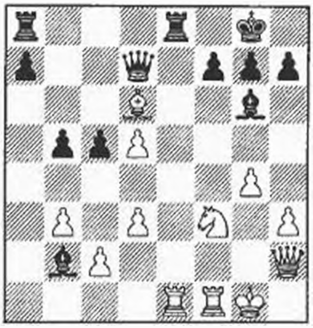
19.♘f3 ♖fe8

This is definitely not the move somebody plays, while he is enjoying his position. What about the line: 19...♗xb2 20.c3 ♗a3 now? Where is White's attack?

20.♕h2

White fails to trap the enemy bishop after 20.g5 ♗xb2 21.c3, because of 21...♕xh3–+.

20...♗xb2 21.♗xd6



21...a5!

This little guy might cause a real trouble (I mean the a-pawn)!

22.♗e5

After 22.♗xc5 ♖xe1 23.♖xe1 ♕xd5 24.♕f2, Black simply pushes his pawn forward 24...a4 and White should perform a miracle in order to avoid the loss.

22...♗xe5 23.♖xe5 ♖xe5 24.♕xe5 ♖e8

Black will not be able to promote his a-pawn so easily: 24...a4?! 25.bxa4 bxa4

26.d6 a3? 27.♕xc5 a2 28.♕c7! ♕xc7 29.dxc7 f6 30.♖a1±.

25.♕c3

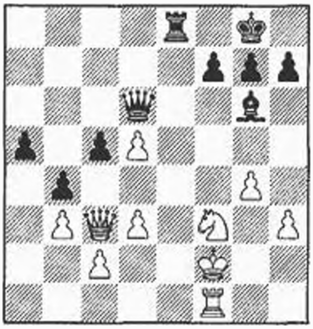
Ruslan would not mind to capture the pawn that we wrote so much about...

25...♕d6?

This solid move dissipates the advantage in fact. The aggressive line: 25...h5! would have been very annoying for White, for example: 26.♖e1 (26.♕xc5 hxg4 27.hxg4 ♕xg4+ 28.♔f2 ♗h5–+; 26.♘h4 hxg4 27.♘xg6 fxg6 28.♕xc5 gxh3∓ Ponomariov) 26...hxg4 27.♖xe8+ (27.♘e5 ♕xd5 28.♘xg6 ♕d4+ 29.♕xd4 ♖xe1+ 30.♔f2 cxd4 31.♔xe1 gxh3–+ Ponomariov) 27...♕xe8 28.♘e5 (28.hxg4 ♕e3+ 29.♔g2 ♗e4!–+; 28.♕e5 ♕xe5 29.♘xe5 a4 30.bxa4 bxa4 31.d6 ♔f8 32.♘d7+ ♔e8 33.♘xc5 a3 34.hxg4 a2 35.♘b3 ♔d7 36.♔f2 ♔xd6 37.♔e3 f5–+) 28...b4 29.♕a1 gxh3 30.♘xg6 ♕e2 31.♘h4 g5 32.♕xa5 ♕g4+ 33.♔h2 gxh4 34.♕a8+ ♔h7 35.d6 ♕f4+ 36.♔h1 ♕c1+ 37.♔h2 ♕xc2+ 38.♔xh3 ♕xd3+ 39.♔xh4 ♕xd6–+.

26.♔f2 b4

This looks very strong, but...



27.♖e1!

White makes a draw quite confidently now. After 27.♕c4 Black had 27...f6, followed by ♗f7.

27...f6

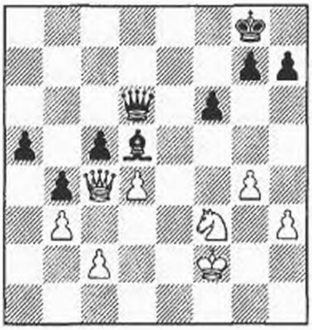
White still has to suffer a little more...

28.♖xe8+ ♗xe8 29.♕c4 ♗f7 30.d4!

This is a good try, otherwise White is just lost.

30...♗xd5

It was still not too late for Black to blunder: 30...cxd4? 31.♕c6!.



31.dxc5

Ruslan made up his mind to play to the end. Maybe he could have even won, who knows? His c-pawn is now passed and queen and knight are usually more powerful in attack than queen and bishop. After: 31.♕xc5 ♕xc5 32.dxc5 ♗xf3 33.♔xf3 ♔f7 34.♔e4 ♔e6 35.♔d4 g6 36.h4 f5 37.gxf5+ gxf5 38.h5, both sides promote their pawns simultaneously: 38...f4 39.♔e4 f3 40.♔xf3 ♔d5 41.♔f4 ♔xc5 42.♔e5 ♔b5 43.♔f6 a4 44.bxa4+ ♔xa4 45.♔g7 ♔a3 46.♔xh7 ♔b2 47.h6 ♔xc2 48.♔g7 b3 49.h7 b2 50.h8♕ b1♕=.

31...♕d7 32.♕f4 ♗xf3

Black decided to make a draw in a queen and pawn endgame. This decision was correct because the white king was so exposed that the perpetual was a distinct possibility.

33.♕xf3 ♕d2+

Black could have also centralized his king with: 33...♔f7.

34.♕e2 ♕f4+ 35.♔g2

White has some winning chances now.

35...♔f7 36.c6 ♕d4!

This is a centralizing multi-purpose move!

37.c7 ♕d5+ 38.♕f3 ♕c5 39.♕b7 ♕xc2+ 40.♔f3 ♕c3+ 41.♔e2 ½ – ½

The result of this game failed to clarify the situation about who was going to be the last in the tournament... (Comments based on the Internet live coverage by A.Khalifman)

121 **A25**

Vallejo Pons – Kramnik

Round 10 5.03

Notes by A. Khalifman

White played in the opening not very ambitiously nevertheless the game became rather sharp. Kramnik was leading at that moment and in case of a win he would have practically secured his first place in the tournament.

1.c4 ♘f6 2.♘c3 e5 3.e3 ♘c6 4.a3

This line turned out to be a perfect opening choice... but for Black.

4...g6

This is a good old classical move. The Paulsen variation with colours reversed after 4...d5 would not be too attractive for Black – see the game Gurevich – Khalifman, Wijk aan Zee 2002.

5.d4 exd4 6.exd4 ♗g7 7.♘f3 d5

This is a Gruenfeld-type pawn-break in the centre. Bareev has played that move before and he used to be Kramnik's coach for a while. Most probably Vladimir knew the game at that moment.

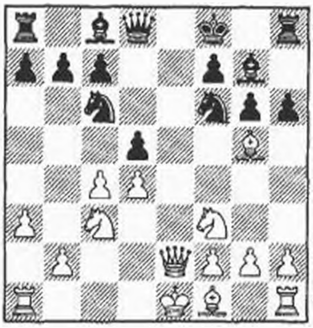
8.♗g5 h6

Bareev sacrificed a pawn and had some initiative after: 8...0–0 9.♘xd5 ♗g4. The game continued with: 10.♗e2 ♗xf3 11.♗xf3 ♖e8+ 12.♔f1 h6, and Black won subsequently, Bistric – Bareev, Bihac 1999.

9.♕e2+

9.♗xf6 ♕xf6 10.♘xd5 ♕d6 seems to be really provocative and would have led to a lively game indeed...

9...♔f8



Kramnik lost his right to castle again?!! It already happened in his first game vs. Leko in Round 7.

10.♗e3

This bishop has done its deed... but 10.♗f4 deserved attention as well.

10...♔g8

This move looks sensible, but I think that 10...♗e6, preserving Black's central position would have been more up to the point at that moment.

11.cxd5 ♘xd5 12.♘xd5 ♕xd5 13.♕b5 ½ – ½

White complies with the fact that something has gone wrong and tries to simplify into a roughly equal endgame... The opponents agreed to a draw here! Well, Vladimir is a really nice guy, but is he not a little too nice in order to be able to win the Linares tournament?!

In case of 13...♗e6, Vladimir possibly failed to see how he could have continued to play for a win after 14.♖c1 (if 14.♕xb7 ♖b8 15.♕xc7 ♖xb2, then Black has some chances to make the opponent go wrong...) 14...♕xb5 15.♗xb5.

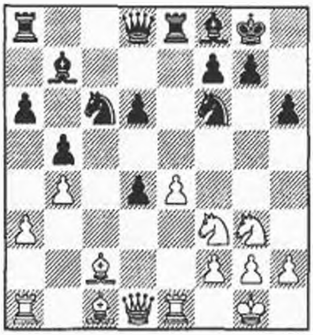
122 **C88**

Kramnik – Anand

Round 11 6.03

Notes by D. Yevseev

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗a4 ♘f6 5.0–0 b5 6.♗b3 ♗b7 7.d3 ♗e7 8.♖e1 0–0 9.♘bd2 ♖e8 10.c3 ♗f8 11.♘f1 h6 12.♘g3 d6 13.a3 ♘a5 14.♗c2 c5 15.b4 ♘c6 16.d4 cxd4 17.cxd4 exd4



18.♗b2

This is a natural move, but possibly it was more reliable to play the simple 18.♘xd4 and the position might dissolve after: 18...♘xd4 19.♕xd4 ♖c8 20.♗b3 d5 21.e5 ♘e4 22.♗b2= into a complete equality.

18...♖c8 19.♗b3

19.♘xd4!? ♘e5!? 20.♘df5 ♘c4 (20...d5!? 21.exd5 ♕xd5 22.♘e3=) 21.♗d4⇄.

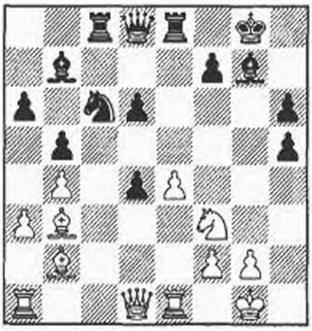
19...g6

White is somehow imperceptibly becoming the defending side to say the least.

20.h4!?

This move was played with the idea to weaken Black's kingside and particularly the f5-square. After the capture of the pawn 20.♘xd4 Black can equalize simply with 20...♗g7=, but he can also play more ambitiously: 20...♘e5!?⇄ ∆21...♘c4, capturing one of the valuable white bishops.

20...♗g7 21.h5 ♘xh5 22.♘xh5 gxh5



23.♗d5?!

I do not quite understand that decision. Is White trying to get an advantage, indeed? He could have equalized by simply capturing the pawn with 23.♘xd4 ♘xd4 (because it is not good for Black to play now 23...♘e5?! 24.♘f5±, and the idea of the march of the h-pawn triumphs. Black loses after 23...♕b6? 24.♕xh5 ♘xd4 25.♗xd4 ♗xd4 26.♕g6+ ♗g7 27.♗xf7+ ♔f8 28.♗xe8 ♖xe8 29.♖ad1⇄; 24.♘f5! 24...♗xb2 25.♕xh5 –

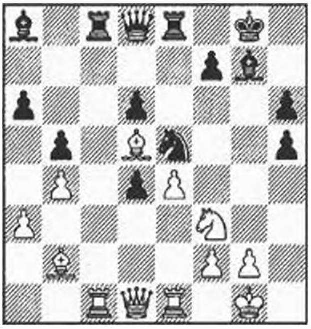
and White's attack is overwhelming. 25...♘e5 26.♘xh6+ ♔g7 27.♘f5+ ♔g8 28.♕g5+ ♘g6 29.♕xg6+–; 26...♔f8 27.♘f5 ♘c4 28.e5! ♗xe5 29.♖xe5+–; 27...♘f3 28.gxf3 d5 29.♖ab1+– and White has an extra pawn and a powerful attack. The attempt to open the 6th rank to defend fails after 25...d5 26.♘xh6+ ♔g7 27.♘f5+ ♔g8 28.♕g5+ ♔f8 29.♕h6+ ♔g8 30.e5! ♗xe5 31.♖xe5+–) 24.♗xd4 ♕g5!? This is Black's reliable route to equality. 25.♗xg7 ♔xg7=. Black's attempt to capture the e4-pawn may only lead to an advantage for White: 24...♖xe4?! 25.♗xf7+! ♔xf7 26.♕xh5+ ♔g8 27.♖xe4 ♗xe4 28.♕g4± or 24...♗xe4?! 25.♗xf7+! (It is not good for White to play 25.♗xg7?! ♔xg7 26.♕d4+ ♕f6∓. It is quite unclear for White to try the lines 25.♖e3!?, or 25.♕xh5!? ♗xd4 26.♗xf7+ ♔f8 27.♗xe8 ♕xe8 28.♕xh6+ ♔g8 29.♖ad1) 25...♔xf7 26.♖xe4 ♖xe4 27.♕f3±.

23...♗a8!

∆♘e5.

24.♗xc6?!

White is definitely worse after that move. He would not have equalized completely with 24.♖c1?! ♘e5 and now:



1) 25.♗xa8?! ♖xc1 26.♗xc1 (26.♕xc1 ♘d3–+) 26...♘xf3+ 27.♕xf3 ♕xa8∓;

2) 25.♖xc8?! ♕xc8 26.♗xa8 (26.♘xd4 ♗xd5 27.exd5 ♘c4∓; 26.♗xd4 ♘xf3+ 27.gxf3 ♕h3∓) 26...♘xf3+ 27.gxf3?! (In case of 27.♕xf3 ♕xa8∓ Black has plenty of pawn weaknesses indeed, but White is two pawns down after all), and now Black wins spectacularly: 27...♕h3!! (27...♕xa8 28.♗xd4 ♖e6∓) 28.♗d5 (Otherwise Black will simply capture the bishop with a winning position. 28.f4 ♖xa8 29.♗xd4 ♗xd4 30.♕xd4 ♔h7!–+) 28...♗e5 (Black is threatening to checkmate on f2 with the standard construction – 29...♗h2+ 30.♔h1 ♗g3+ etc.) 29.f4 (29.♕c2 ♗h2+ 30.♔h1 d3!–+; 29.♗xd4 ♗h2+ 30.♔h1 ♖e5!!–+) 29...♗xf4 30.♗xd4 ♗h2+ 31.♔h1 ♖e5! 32.♕b3 ♗g3+ 33.♔g1 ♖g5 34.fxg3 ♖xg3+ 35.♕xg3+ ♕xg3+ 36.♔f1 ♕d3–+;

3) 25.♘xd4 25...♗xd5 (25...♘c4!? 26.♗xc4 bxc4∓) 26.exd5 ♕g5∓ (26...♘c4 27.♘c6!⇄).

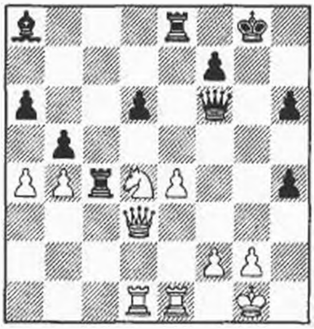
It was still not too late for White to capture simply on d4 – 24.♘xd4 ♘xd4 25.♗xd4 (25.♗xa8? ♘c2+) 25...♗xd5 26.♗xg7 ♗xe4 27.♗xh6 and he has almost equalized, for example 27...♕h4 28.♖e3!? (28.f3 ♕f6!∓; 28.♕xd6 ♖e6 29.♕f4=; 28...♕g4! 29.♕h2 ♔h7↑ ∆♖g8, h4) 28...♖e6 (28...♕f6 29.♖g3+ ♗g6 30.♖c1∓) 29.♕d4 ♖xh6 30.♖xe4 ♕f6 31.♖d1∓ etc.

24...♖xc6 25.♗xd4 ♖c4 26.♕d3 ♗xd4 27.♘xd4 ♕f6 28.♖ad1 h4∓ 29.a4

(diagram)

29...♖xb4?

This move dissipates Black's advantage and as far as I know White was in a time-trouble here! After the quite obvious move 29...♕g6!? White had to



play very precisely in order to save the game: 30.f3 (30.axb5?! ♖xe4! 31.♖xe4 ♗xe4 32.♕h3 ab∓ 33.♘xb5? ♗xg2!–+) 30...d5! (This is stronger than 30...h3 31.♖e2 ♖xb4 32.axb5 axb5 33.♕d2 ♖c4 34.♘xb5 d5∓; 33.♕a3!? ♖a4 34.♕b3=∞. In case of 31...d5 White can simply capture the pawn – 32.axb5 axb5 33. exd5–) 31.axb5 axb5 32.♘f5 (32.♘xb5 32...♖xb4∓. After 32.e5!? ♕xd3 33.♖xd3 ♖xb4 34.f4∓ White has some compensation in the endgame – an excellent blocking knight and a powerful pawn on e5, but it is enough to save the game with two pawns down?!) 32...h3! 33.♖e2 ♖xb4∓ (It is not so clear if Black plays 33...dxe4 34.♕d7=∞ Δ35.♘e7; but he can prepare capturing on e4 with prophylactic moves like – 33...♔f8!?∓ or 33...♔h7!?∓). As you could see White's defence would have been very difficult after 30...d5!, moreover White was in a time-trouble, so if you take into account the quite specific character of the position White's prospects would have been really gloomy indeed.

30.axb5 axb5

Black's chances to play for a win were very slim after 30...♖b2!? 31.♘f5 axb5 32.♕xd6 ♕xd6 33.♘xd6.

31.♕d2!

Anand must have missed that move for sure.

31...♖a4 32.♘xb5 ♖axe4

The opponents agreed to a draw here, because after

33.♖xe4 ♖xe4 34.♕xd6 ♕xd6 35.♖xd6! ½ – ½

the resources to continue playing would have been totally exhausted.

123 **B80**

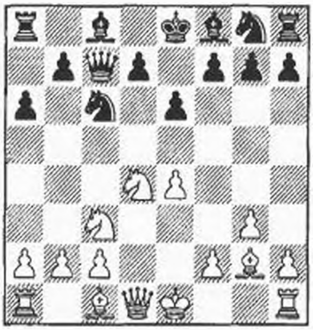
Leko – Ponomariov

Round 11 6.03

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 e6 5.♘c3 a6 6.g3

This is one of the most popular plans in the Paulsen variation. White develops his bishop on g2 and defends the e4 pawn reliably. He can later choose between playing in the centre and on the queenside (as in the game), or on the kingside with (♘de2, h3, g4, ♘g3 and g5).

6...♕c7 7.♗g2



7...d6

Black plays much more often lately 7...♘f6 8.0–0 ♘xd4 9.♕xd4 ♗c5 10.♗f4 d6 – followed by h6 and e5 after having developed his bishop outside of the pawn chain.

8.0–0 ♗d7

Plenty of times with Black you will have to choose between the least of evils. Now he would have serious problems with his weak pawns on the queenside after 8...♘f6 9.♖e1 ♗e7 10.♘xc6 bxc6 11.e5 dxe5 12.♖xe5.

9.a4

This is White's main plan in this position. He takes advantage of his lead in development in order to fix the weak b6-square in the enemy camp.

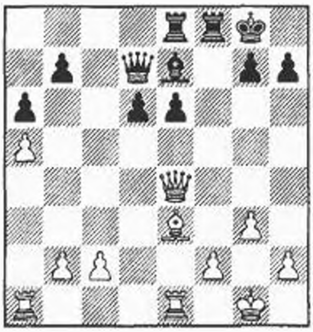
9...♘f6 10.♘xc6 ♗xc6 11.a5 ♗e7 12.♗e3 0–0 13.♖e1 ♘d7 14.♘a4 ♖ae8

Black is deprived of his usual queenside counterplay so he is trying to organize some action in the centre with the help of f7-f5.

15.♘b6 f5 16.♘xd7 ♕xd7 17.♕d3

The other defence of the e4-pawn for White is quite feeble – 17.♗b6 f4!∓, and Black obtains excellent counterplay bringing his bishop to the e5-square.

17...fxe4 18.♗xe4 ♗xe4 19.♕xe4



All these moves have been tested in practice numerous times. The opponents are right into the middle game without having made a single original move of their own yet.

Black's position has one evident and one potential drawback.

The obvious drawback is the weak pawn on e6 on the semi-open e-file. It should not move because e6-e5 would weaken the key d5-square and that means it must be defended on e6 with heavy pieces.

The potential defect of Black's position is that White's a5-pawn fixes two enemy pawns on a6 and b7. That might become of a paramount importance in the endgame if after some reduction of material White remains with one pawn against two on the queenside and with three pawns against two on the kingside. White will put then his bishop on b6 and combine the threat against Black's weak b7-pawn with an offensive of the pawn majority on the kingside. This is probably White's most favourable script of actions, while Black should be able to prevent this with a precise defence.

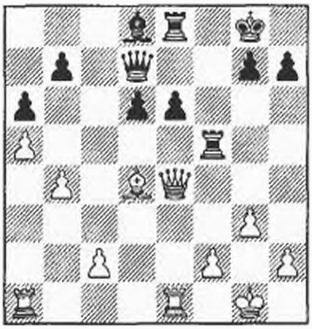
19...♖f5

This is a relatively rare move but possibly the very best for Black.

20.♗d4

The opponents agreed to a draw in the game Nunn – Andersson, Wijk aan Zee 1983, after 20.♗b6 ♗f6 21.c3.

20...♗d8 21.b4

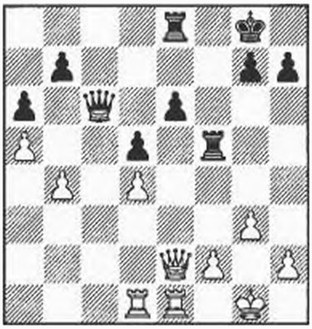


This move diminishes White's prospects considerably. He weakens his queenside and that might become important after the exchange of the dark-squared bishops and additionally deprives himself of the possibility to attack the b7-pawn directly.

21...d5 22.♕e2 ♗f6

The trade of these bishops is favourable for Black. The weaknesses of both sides are becoming a matter of parity now and the chances are balanced too.

23.♖ad1 ♕c6 24.c3 ♗xd4 25.cxd4



25...♕c3

Black's counterplay is quite sufficient after that move.

26.♕d2 ♖f3 27.♕xc3 ♖xc3 28.♖c1 ♖b3

White is now forced to surrender the open c-file.

29.♖b1

White's attempt to occupy the 7th rank fails after 29.♖c7 ♖xb4 30.♖d7 ♔f8 31.♖c1 ♖e7 and Black has a winning position.

29...♖xb1 30.♖xb1 ♖c8 31.b5 ½–½

The opponents agreed to a draw because after 31...♖c4 32.bxa6 bxa6 33.♖b6 ♔f7 34.♖xa6 ♖xd4 the material is equal and White has no winning chances at all.

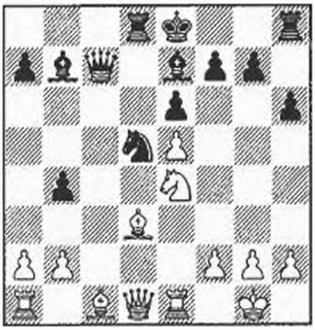
124 D47

Radjabov – Vallejo Pons

Round 11 6.03

Notes by V. Beim

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.e3 e6 5.♘f3 ♘bd7 6.♗d3 dxc4 7.♗xc4 b5 8.♗d3 ♗b7 9.e4 b4 10.♘a4 c5 11.e5 ♘d5 12.♘xc5 ♘xc5 13.dxc5 ♗xc5 14.0–0 h6 15.♘d2 ♕c7 16.♖e1 ♖d8 17.♘e4 ♗e7



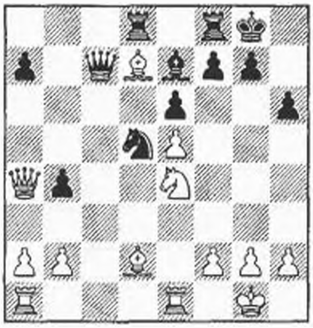
18.♕a4+N

The opponents are playing a rare line of the Meran which is coming into fashion lately. White's last move is a novelty, since 18.♘g3 was usually played before.

18...♗c6 19.♗b5 ♗d7!

The idea of the novelty for White is to exchange Black's powerful light-squared bishop. He succeeds in doing that indeed, but the black knight on d5 becomes completely safe instead. Vallejo's excellent last move ensures for him the possibility to deploy his forces harmoniously, with a definite lead in development. You need to compare the game to the other possible line after 19...♗xb5 20.♕xb5+ ♕d7 21.♕e2 to be able to really appreciate the value of the novelty.

20.♗d2 0–0 21.♗xd7



21...♖xd7!?

This is the correct capture and it is part of the plan that Black started with his move 19. White must be very careful now.

22.♖ac1 ♕b7 23.♕b3 ♖c8 24.h3?!

White played that move quite carelessly. He probably did not like 24.♕g3 ♔f8, but he had to play safely and exchange rooks: 24.♖xc8+ ♕xc8 25.♖c1 with an equal game. Now after:

24...♖xc1!

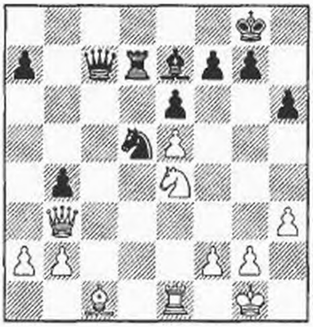
White suddenly had some problems.

25.♗xc1

This is the point! Black counters the natural move 25.♖xc1 with the powerful tactical strike 25...♘c3! and after 26.bxc3 (Black has the advantage after 26.♘xc3 ♖xd2, as well as after 26.♗xc3 ♕xe4) 26...♕xe4 he seizes the initiative.

25...♕c7

(diagram)



26.♗d2!

Radjabov had a hunch of danger and started defending precisely. The seemingly aggressive 26.♕g3 ♔f8 is wrong because the c2-square is vulnerable.

26...♕xe5?!

Vallejo loses the logical thread of the fight. He could preserve the equality with 26...♖d8 27.♕g3 ♔f8 28.♖c1= In case he wanted to try to get some edge, he could have tried 26...♔f8!? (We have already mentioned that move as a possibility in some lines and it is quite typical for the situation on the board.) 27.♘g3 (White should refrain from 27.♕g3? ♕c2 now, and after 27.♕a4 ♘b6 28.♕b3 ♕c4 Black is more active too.) 27...♕b6 28.♘e4 ♕d4 and Black is slightly better.

27.♘c5 ♕xe1+ 28.♗xe1 ♗xc5 29.♗d2 ♖c7 30.♔f1 ♗e7 31.♔e2 ♗f6 32.f4

The outcome of the game would not have changed after 32.♗xb4 ♖b7 33.a3 a5 34.♕a4 ♘xb4 35.axb4 ♖xb4 36.♕xa5 ♖xb2+.

32...a5 ½ – ½

125 **B32**

Anand – Radjabov

Round 12 7.03

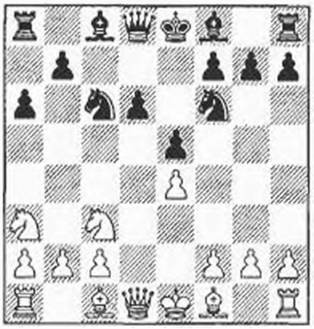
Notes by A. Bezgodov

The great players have always been inventing plenty of interesting novelties. Some of them become popular immediately, the media publicizes them, and they turn gradually into *basic systems of attack and defence. Some others, that have failed the first time they were used, pass unnoticed, or are qualified as unsatisfactory. Anand's move 8 in this game must have surprised Teimour Radjabov, no doubt about that. He probably thought it to be a novelty. This "novelty" was in fact played for the first time back in 1941 by the great Alexander Alekhine in a simultaneous exhibition. He only managed to draw that game and did it "the sly way" – by offering it. Later that move was employed (quite successfully at that) by the young Moldavian grandmaster Bologan.*

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 e5 5.♘b5 d6 6.♘1c3

The move 6.c4, aimed at occupying more space, is presently becoming less popular.

6...a6 7.♘a3 ♘f6



8.♘c4!?

That knight does not feel comfortably on a3, so the idea to take it to a better place looks attractive. The transition to some lines of the Sveshnikov variation with 8.♗g5 b5 9.♘d5 ♗e7 was considered a must for many years, but now Black gets a good game after that.

8...b5

Or 8...♗e6 9.♘e3.

9.♘e3 ♗e7 10.g3!

The bishop will be ideally placed on g2.

10...h5!?N

Radjabov is attacking with his rook pawn and that idea seems original and logical. White has to take care and Black's king might not even need to castle. The routine 10...0–0 11.♗g2 ♗e6 12.♘cd5± is worse, because it allows White to dominate in the centre. 10...b4?! 11.♘cd5 ♘xe4 12.♗g2 f5 13.c3↑ is not so good for Black either.

11.♗g2

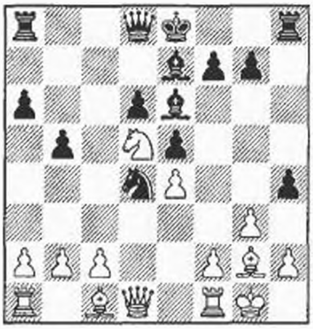
Anands totally disregards Black's "h" file – operation. He is not in any danger by now, but Black gets some counterplay after all. He could have tried instead 11.h3!? and if 11...h4 then 12.g4. White weakens the black squares like that, but the space advantage more than compensates that defect of the position – 12...b4 (12...♘h7 13.♘cd5 ♗g5 14.c4 ♘d4 15.cxb5 axb5 16.f4±; 15.f4!?±) 13.♘cd5 ♖b8 (13...♘xe4?? 14.♗g2+–) 14.♗d3 ♘h7 15.♘f5 ♗xf5 16.gxf5±.

11...h4 12.0–0 ♘d4

That imprecision is probably due to the fact that both opponents are in dire straits. That knight has nothing useful to do on d4 and enables White to push it away later with c2-c3 gaining plenty of time. Radjabov had to open the "h" file outright with – 12...hxg3 13.hxg3, then deprive White's knight on e3 from the beautiful f5 square with – 13...g6! 14. ♘cd5, and then solve the problems of his king – 14..♔f8! 15.c3 ♖b8 16.b4 ♘xd5 17.♘xd5 ♗g5 18.a4

♗xc1 19.♕xc1 ♗e6∞. Had Black played like that, White might not even dream about any advantage at all.

13.♘cd5 ♘xd5 14.♘xd5 ♗e6



15.♘e3

It is not easy to understand why Anand retreats that knight from the central outpost? It is simple and logical to play the forceful 15.c3 ♗xd5 (Or 15...♘c6 16.♗e3 ♖b8 17.♕d2±) 16.exd5 ♘f5 17.g4 h3 18.♗e4 ♘h4 19.a4±.

15...hxg3

Black decided to open that file for the rook. The position looks almost equal after the mutual imprecision White is a little better in the center and on the queen side, while Black has some chances along the open file. Black could have also presented White with the two-bishop advantage, which is immaterial in this position: 15...♗g5 16.c3 hxg3 17.hxg3 ♗xe3 18.♗xe3 ♘c6 19.♕d2 ♘a5 20.b3 ♖c8 21.♖ad1 ♘b7∞.

16.hxg3 ♕d7 17.c3 ♘c6

The knight must retreat, but Black is out of danger now, because the adversary lost plenty of time on idle knight moves too.

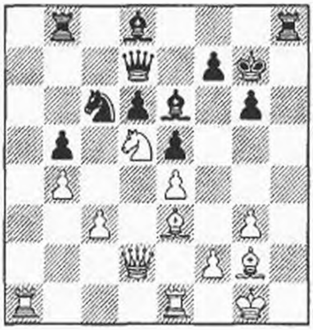
18.♖e1 ♖b8 19.a4 g6

Radjabov finds the right plan to evacuate his king to safety.

20.axb5 axb5 21.♘d5 ♗d8 22.♗e3 ♔f8

The line – 22...f5?! 23. ♖a6 ♖c8 24.exf5 gxf5 25.♗b6± looks rather dangerous for Black.

23.b4 ♔g7 24.♕d2



24...♗xd5?!

This decision by Radjabov seems quite puzzling. The position was about equal and he did not need to trade his excellent bishop for the relatively harmless (although centralized) white knight. The weakness of the b5 pawn and just as well as of the whole complex of white squares makes White's position easily preferable now. Black had excellent drawing chances after: 24...♗h3 25.f3! (25.♗h1 ♗f1 26.♖xf1?? ♕h3–+; 25.♗f3 ♗g4 26.♗h1?? ♖xh1+ 27.♔xh1 ♗f3+ 28.♔h2 ♕g4–+; 25.f4 ♕g4 26.♕f2 ♗xg2 27.♕xg2 ♘e7+) 25...♗xg2 26.♕xg2 ♘e7 27.♖ed1 ♘xd5 28.♖xd5 ♗b6 29.♗xb6 ♖xb6=.

25.♕xd5 ♘e7 26.♕d2

26.♕d3!?

26...♗b6 27.♖ed1 ♖hc8

Black is defending indirectly the d6 pawn in that fashion and is keeping the "c3" pawn under observation. The series of exchanges was not promising Black anything favourable at all:

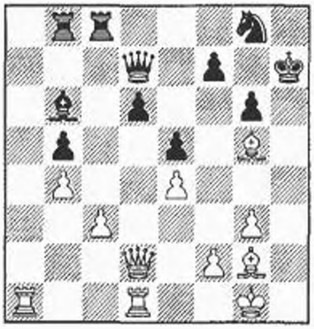
27...♗xe3 28.♕xe3 ♖a8 29.♖a5 ♖xa5 30.bxa5 ♖a8 31.♖a1 ♖a6 32.♕d3 ♕c7 33.♕xb5 ♕xc3 34.♖a4±.

28.♗h6+

Anand begins to annoy Black's king, while the bishop exchange can await for better times.

28...♔h7 29.♗g5 ♘g8

Radjabov does not want to let the white bishop to f6 understandably, so Anand has to look for other ways of attack.



30.♔h2!

This conceals a double threat – ♗h3 and ♖h1. This king-move can be a nasty surprise for the opponent, moreover that it might easily get overlooked or underestimated.

30...♖c4

The rook was removed from c8 to take away the sting from the ♗h3-idea, but now White's rook could have occupied the "h" file that was opened by Black not so long ago... Suddenly White abandons his original idea and... wins immediately.

31.♗f1

The other possibility was objectively stronger and was probably winning by force 31.♖h1 ♔g7 32.♗f1 ♖c7 33.♔g2 ♕c6 34.♗h6+ ♘xh6 35.♕xh6+ ♔f6 36.♕h4+ ♔g7 (36...♔e6 37.♗e2 f5 38.♗f3+–) 37.♖d1±.

31...♖xe4??

That is unbelievable! Radjabov might have decided that Anand has just blundered a pawn, or what? If 31...♖c7 32.♖a3 ♕g4 33.f3! ♕xf3 34.♕e2! ♕xe2+ 35.♗xe2 f6 36.♗c1±.

32.f3+– ♘f6

Black had better refrain from playing that move and resign instead. Or 32...♖c4 33.♗xc4 bxc4 34.♕xd6+–.

33.♗xf6 ♖e3 1–0

Evidently Black finally understood he was losing a piece and resigned at the end. This game implies of a lot of nerve energy employed and lost, and it is abundant with plenty of mistakes some of which rather grave at that. It is quite valuable nevertheless, because it marks the appearance of a new interesting plan to fight the number 2 – Sveshnikov system, the line with 4...e5, on super grandmaster level. This might bring certain new fans, some 60 years later, to the plan of Alekhine – Bologan – Anand!

126 E50

Ponomariov – Kasparov

Round 12 7.03

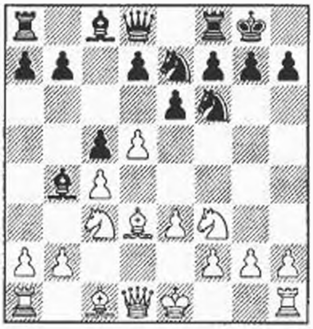
1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.e3 0–0 5.♗d3 c5 6.♘f3 ♘c6

This is a rare move. Black usually prefers 6...d5 here.

7.d5!? ♘e7

The complications after 7...exd5 8.cxd5 ♘xd5 9.♗xh7+ ♔xh7 10.♕xd5 should be more or less in favour of White. For example in the game

Gligoric – Larsen, Niksic 1983, there followed 10...♔g8 (White was threatening 11.♕h5+ and 12.♘g5) 11.0–0 (now 11.♕h5 is not so effective due to 11...d5! and if 12.♘g5?, then 12...♗f5∓) ♗xc3 12.bxc3 d6 13.e4 ♗g4 14.♘g5 ♕e7 15.h3 ♗e6 and now after 16.♕d1!± (with the idea to play 17.♕h5 next) White could have achieved some edge.



8.e4

In case of 8.d6 Black must play 8...♗xc3+ (or 8...♘c6!?∞) 9.bxc3 ♘c6!?∞. The other retreat of the knight 9...♘g6?! is clearly worse. I managed to find an interesting miniature in one of the old magazines of the Soviet era. After 10.h4!↑ in the game Garber – Ustzov, Kattakurgan 1983, Black played 10...♕b6? and was immediately subjected to a crushing attack – 11.h5 ♘h8 12.e4 ♘e8 13.e5 f6 14.♕c2 h6 15.♗h7+ ♔f7 16.♕g6+! ♘xg6 17.hxg6#.

8...d6

The immediate exchange 8...♗xc3+ 9.bxc3 d6 stabilizes the situation in the centre, but this is favourable for White. After 10.♘h4 (it is maybe more precise for White to play 10.♘d2!? with the idea to follow with the typical manoeuvre ♘f1-e3) 10...e5 (Black has chances to emphasize the drawbacks of White's last move only with the help of 10...♘g6!? 11.♘xg6 fxg6∞) 11.g3 ♖e8 (11...♘g6 12.♘f5±) 12.♖b1 ♘g6 13.♘g2 ♗h3 14.♘e3 (In general, if White manages to bring his knight to e3 in positions of this type, Black has no real counterplay at all.) 14...♕c8 15.f3 h5 16.♖b2 b6 17.♖g1 (White is threatening 18.g4) 17...♗d7 18.♔f2 ♘f8 19.♔g2 g6 20.♔h1± and White had some edge in the game Taimanov – Short, Baku 1983.

9.♗d2!?

Ponomariov wants to preserve the elasticity of his pawn structure on the queenside. After 9.0–0 ♗xc3 10.bxc3 e5 11.♘h4 ♘e8∞ as it was played in the game Kozma – Demeter, Hlohovec 1975, White had to consider 12...♘xd5 as well as 12...f5.

White can play another move with the same idea – 9.♕c2, and Black preferred to close the centre immediately after it with 9...e5, which led to an unclear position in the game Panno – G.Garcia, Havana 1969.

9...exd5

This is a novelty. In the game Buckley – Webb, England 1999, Black played instead 9...♘g6 10.0–0 e5∞.

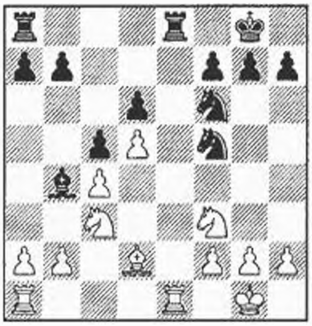
10.exd5

The transposition into a pawn structure of the type of the Benoni Defence with 10.cxd5 ♘g6∞ is not promising White much. Black's minor pieces are very active and he has excellent counterchances.

10...♗f5 11.♕c2 ♕d7 12.0–0 ♗xd3 13.♕xd3 ♕f5=

The activity of the black pieces is amply compensating the insignificant space deficit.

14.♕xf5 ♘xf5 15.♖fe1 ♖fe8



16.♖ac1?!

Black seizes the initiative after that imprecision. It was better for White to play 16.a3, since it was not good for Black to retreat with the bishop – 16...♗a5 because of 17.b4! cxb4 (17...♖xe1?! 18.♖xe1 cxb4 19.♘e4±) 18.♖xe8+ ♖xe8 19.axb4± and White was slightly better. In case Black plays 16...♗xc3 17.♗xc3 ♘e4, White solves all his problems with 18.♗e5!?= (Ponomariov).

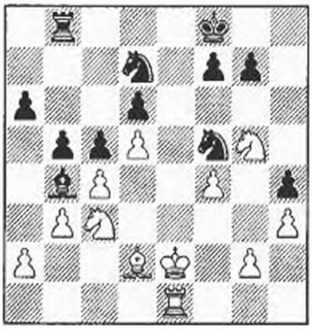
16...h5 17.♔f1 a6 18.h3 b5!

Black starts an offensive on the queenside.

19.b3 ♔f8 20.♘g5 h4 21.♖e2 ♖ab8

Kasparov recommended here 21...♖ed8!?. It would have been much more difficult for White then to bring his king to the defence of the queenside.

22.♖ce1 ♖xe2 23.♔xe2 ♘d7 24.f4



24...g6?!

After that tentative move White manages to parry Black's initiative. It was much better for Black to play 24...♘f6 25.♔d3 ♗a5! (with the idea to follow with 26...bxc4+) 26.♘ge4 bxc4+ 27.bxc4 ♘xe4 28.♘xe4 ♗xd2 29.♘xd2 ♖b2↑ (Ponomariov) and Black would have preserved his positional pressure.

25.♔d3 ♗a5 26.♘ge4 bxc4+ 27.bxc4 ♗d8

White can counter now 27...♖b2 with 28.♖b1=.

28.♖b1 ♖xb1 29.♘xb1 ♘f6 30.♘bc3 ♔e8 31.♗e1 ♘h5 32.♘e2 ♔d7 33.♗c3 ♗e7 34.♔d2 ½ – ½

127 **A34**

Vallejo Pons – Leko

Round 12 7.03

Notes by D. Yevseev

1.♘f3 c5 2.c4 ♘f6 3.♘c3 d5 4.cxd5 ♘xd5 5.e4 ♘b4 6.♗c4 ♘d3+ 7.♔e2 ♘f4+ 8.♔f1 ♘e6 9.b4!?

This is a dynamic gambit variation that was played for the first time in the game Huebner – L.Portisch, Abano Therme 1980. White sacrifices a pawn in order to eliminate the blockade of the central d4-square and plans to push forward his central pawns and open the position. He will then rely on his substantial lead in development.

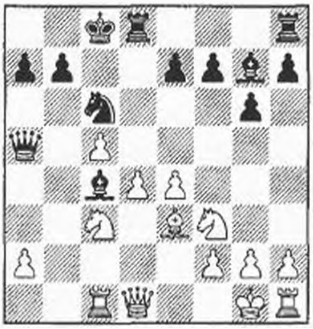
9...g6

Black refuses to accept the pawn and sacrifices a pawn in his stead in order to develop as quickly as possible. There were games in which Black actually took the pawn e.g. 9...cxb4 10.♘e2 Loginov – Van Wely, Moscow 2002, or 10.♘d5 J.Piket – Van Wely, Escaldes 1998.

10.bxc5 ♗g7 11.♗xe6 ♗xe6 12.d4 ♘c6 13.♗e3 ♗c4+?!

This move will soon turn out to be a mistake. Black's natural move here is 13...♕a5.

14.♔g1 ♕a5 15.♖c1 0–0–0



16.♘b1!!

This is the refutation! Both players were following a recommendation of GM Igor Stohl up to now. He showed that line by some transposition in fact – 13...♕a5 14.♖c1 ♗c4+ 15.♔g1 0–0–0. He finished the variation with the moves 16.h3 f5 17.exf5 gxf5 and evaluated the position as "unclear". The move in the game clarifies the situation – the white knight avoids the x-rays of the bishop on g7 and goes later to d2. White will not be pinned along the d-file anymore and White's central d-pawn will be pushed forward with a decisive effect. It looks to me that after this game Black should forget about that line, or try to find some improvement earlier.

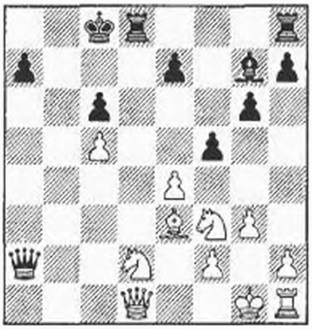
16...♕a6 17.d5

17.♘bd2?! ♗e2.

17...f5

Black loses now two pieces for a rook, but his position is also very bad after: 17...♗e2 18.♕b3 ♗xf3 (18...♘a5 19.♕a3±) 19.gxf3 ♘d4 (19...♘e5 20.♘d2±) 20.♗xd4 ♗xd4, and White can achieve an overwhelming advantage after 21.c6± or 21.♖c4!?±.

18.♖xc4! ♕xc4 19.♘bd2 ♕xa2 20.dxc6 bxc6 21.g3



White needs only a couple of moves to bring his rook into action. Black will hardly be able to do anything significant during that time, so White's two pieces will be much stronger than the rook in the arising position.

21...♖d3 22.♔g2 fxe4 23.♘g5 ♖f8 24.♘gxe4 ♗e5 25.♖e1 h5 26.h4

White does not need to be in a hurry because Black has no real counterplay at all.

26...♖fd8 27.♕b1 ♕xb1 28.♖xb1 ♗c7 29.♘c4 ♖8d5 30.♖a1 ♔b7 31.♖a4

It is really hard to recommend something for Black in this position. It is not that his position is so bad (the material is in fact approximately equal), but he does not have any prospects for active play whatsoever. White has an extra soldier and he is going to organize an attack against the weak black pawns a7, c6, e7, g6 or an onslaught against the black king and Black has nothing to counter that with.

31...♖d7 32.♘g5 ♖3d5 33.♘e6 ♖f5 34.♘d4 ♖f6 35.♖b4+ ♔a6

35...♔c8!?.

36.♖b1 ♖d5 37.♘c2 ♖d7 38.♘b4+ ♔b5 39.♘d2 ♔a4

39...♔a5 40.♘e4 ♖e6 41.♘g5 ♖f6 42.♘h7 ♖e6 (42...♖f7 43.♘xc6+-) 43.♘f8+-.

40.♘e4 ♖e6 41.♘c3+ ♔a5 42.♘c2

Δ43.♖a1#.

42...♔a6 43.♘d4 1-0

Black resigned because after 43...♖f6 44.♘e4 he loses the c6-pawn.

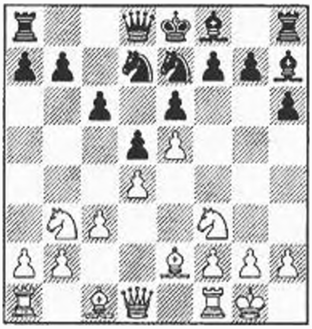
128 **B12**

Kasparov – Vallejo Pons

Round 13 8.03

Notes by V. Beim

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 ♗f5 4.♘d2 h6 5.♘b3 e6 6.♘f3 ♘d7 7.♗e2 ♘e7 8. 0-0 ♗h7 9.c3



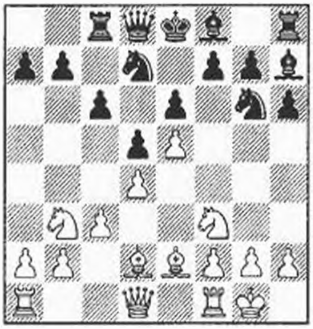
9...♖c8

This variation is relatively new and it has not been analysed extensively yet. It looks like Black has not solved his opening problems and his position remains cramped. He wants to push c6-c5 as quickly as possible, so that the knight on e7 can go to c6, but it is not working yet and in case of 9...c5? 10.♘xc5 ♘xc5 11.dxc5 ♘c6 12.b4; or 9...♕c7?! 10.♖e1 c5 11.♘xc5 ♘xc5 12.dxc5 ♕xc5 13.♕a4+! ♘c6 14.♗b5! White has a clear advantage.

10.♗d2

Of course not 10.♗e3?! ♘f5.

10...♘g6



11.♗e3!

This move now is quite purposeful.

11...♗e7 12.♘e1 c5 13.f4 0-0 14.♘f3 c4

It seems that Black is almost forced to reduce the tension in the centre because lines like: 14...♘h4? 15.♘xh4 cxd4 16.♕xd4 ♗xh4 17.♕xa7 are rather unfavourable for him. The situation now is quite typical for attacks on different sides of the board. Having in mind the paramount importance of the king, the tournament practice shows conclusively that the player who attacks the king has usually better chances.

15.♘c1!

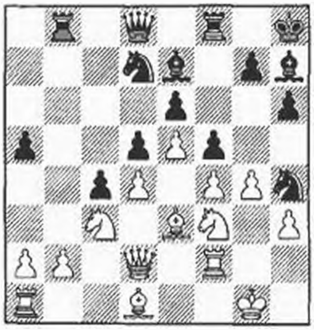
This is the right square for the knight, because it will only hamper the coordination of the other pieces on d2.

15...b5 16.♕d2 a5 17.♗d1! f5

Vallejo is trying to impede the advance of the white pawns and now

White will have to open his king too. Black's other playable possibility was the immediate 17...♘h4!?.

18.♘e2 b4 19.h3 ♖b8 20.g4 bxc3 21.♘xc3 ♘h4 22.♖f2 ♔h8



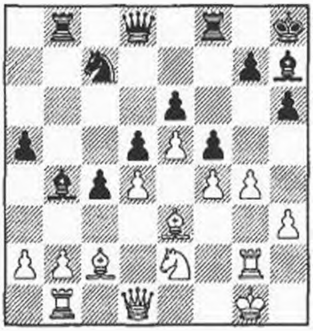
23.♗a4!

This decision is a bit surprising at first sight. The idea is that White cannot place his bishop on c2 immediately. He is attacking now the knight on d7 and that restricts partially Black's possibilities, for example: 23...♖b6 24.♘xh4 ♗xh4 25.♖g2 ♕b8?? 26.♗xd7.

23...♘b6 24.♗c2

The bishop is on its perfect square already.

24...♘a8 25.♖b1 ♘c7 26.♘xh4 ♗xh4 27.♖g2 ♗e7 28.♕d1 ♗b4 29.♘e2

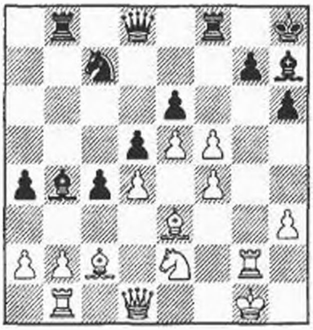


29...a4?!

White's pressure looks much more dangerous than Black's threats. Accordingly Black is sacrificing a pawn to create some counterplay. This sacrifice seems to be unsatisfactory and maybe he had to try instead: 29...fxg4!? 30.hxg4 ♗e4 31.♖h2 ♕e8, although it has always been too risky to play in such a way against Kasparov. On the other hand – how should one play against him indeed...?

30.gxf5?!

Kasparov does not choose the best line here and he presents his opponent with an effective counterplay. It seems much better for him to play the recommendation of P.Lucacs: 30.a3! ♗e7 31.g5. Black's a4-pawn is doomed and White has better prospects on both sides of the board.



30...exf5!

It is disadvantageous for Black to play: 30...♗xf5 31.♗xf5 ♖xf5 32.♘g3 ♖f8 (32...♖f7 33.♕h5 ♕f8 34.♖f1) 33.♕xa4.

31.♗xa4 ♘e6

This is the fine point, because now Black's knight is ideally placed and it used to be a sorry sight only a couple of moves ago. This justifies amply the sacrifice of a pawn and we can say that

White in fact settled for too little in that position.

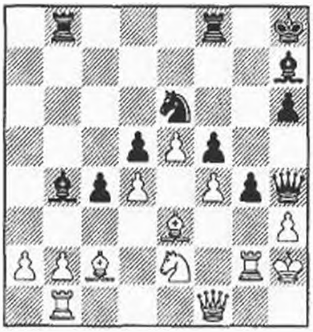
32.♗c2

The situation on the kingside changed in Black's favour definitely and White had better try to do something on the other side of the board, for example: 32.b3!? c3 33.♖c1 and now: 33...♖c8 34.a3!? ♗xa3 35.♖xc3 and after 35...♖xc3 (but not 35...♕h4? 36.♖xc8 ♖xc8 37.♗d7+–) 36.♘xc3 ♕h4 (36...♕a5!?) 37.♘xd5 and White is clearly better. It is interesting for Black to try 33...g5.

32...♕h4 33.♔h2 g5 34.♕f1

White could have started operations on the queenside and in the centre with: 34.a3!? ♗e7 35.b4 cxb3 36.♗xb3, but Kasparov obviously relied on outplaying his opponent in a direct clash.

34...g4



35.♖g1?!

Black's initiative is developing freely after that move and White will be forced to repeat moves in the end. Maybe White preserved some winning chances after: 35.♖g3!? ♖g8 36.♕g2!? ♖bd8 37.♕f2!? ♕h5 38.♔g2!?

35...♖g8 36.♗f2 ♕h5 37.♘g3 ♕f7 38.♘e2

Black's pressure becomes too dangerous after 38.♗e3 h5!.

38...♕h5 39.♘g3 ♕f7 40.♘e2 ½ – ½

129 C42

Leko – Anand

Round 13 8.03

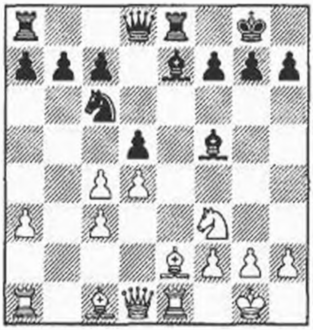
Notes by A. Bezgodov

The Petroff Defence has remained for long years extremely popular in tournaments of all levels. The world's best players spend considerable time and effort to perceive the secrets of seemingly simple and nearly symmetrical positions. Leko introduced against Anand a novelty on move 16th - quite early for such a deeply explored opening. I would not say that Anand coped with the new problems at his best.

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘f6 3.♘xe5 d6 4.♘f3 ♘xe4 5.d4 d5 6.♗d3 ♘c6

The continuation 6...♗d6 offers almost the same chances, and it also has a long history.

7.0–0 ♗e7 8.c4 ♘b4 9.♗e2 0–0 10.♘c3 ♗f5 11.a3 ♘xc3 12.bxc3 ♘c6 13.♖e1 ♖e8



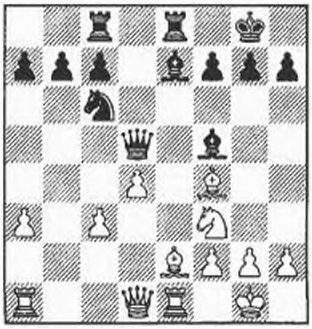
The last two moves are worth special attention – the rooks take their stand on the as yet un-opened "open" e-file! Of course, these nebulous actions are the result of a long study of the hidden subtleties of the position.

14.cxd5

This move has not gained wide popularity yet, but after Peter Leko's success in this game it is likely to become White's basic weapon. Lately Black players have succeeded in defending after 14.♗f4 dxc4 15.♗xc4 ♗d6 16.♖xe8+ ♕xe8 17.♗xd6 cxd6 18.♘g5 ♗g6 19.h4. White's initiative looks dangerous, but Black manages to repel the threats: 19...♕e7 20.♕g4 h6. A forced continuation which leads only to a draw is 21.h5 (Some questions remain after 21.♘h3, but Anand is well familiar with this continuation – recently, he defeated Anatoly Karpov with it. Leko, however, was reluctant to follow his opponent's analysis up to a possible draw) 21...♗xh5 22.♕xh5 hxg5 23.♖d1 ♖f8 24.♖d3 ♕e1+ 25.♔h2 ♕xf2 26.♖h3 ♕f4+ 27.♔g1 ♕c1= Movsesian – Gelfand, Bled 2002.

14...♕xd5 15.♗f4 ♖ac8

Anand does not feel like gambling. A more extravagant way of defending is connected with 15...♘a5!?



16.♗d3!?N

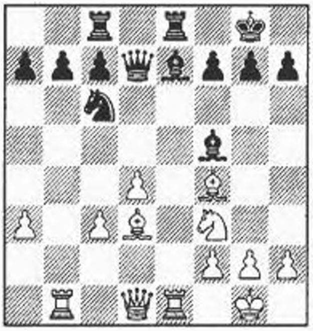
A seemingly calm, but quite dangerous for Black offer to exchange bishops. Such novelties are typical for Peter Leko's style – simple and not eye-catching, these moves often have the best practical effect. Up to now White players have preferred a sharp pawn advance: 16.c4. That position was put to the test in the recent famous match Kasparov - Karpov, New York 2002 and yielded Black (commanded by Anatoly Karpov) a sensational success.

16...♕d7

A good move. The attempt to make White's initiative stall by 16...♗xd3 17.♕xd3 b5 18.a4!± is too simple and gives nothing good.

17.♖b1

Leko faces his opponent with a simple task - to protect the b7-pawn. Unexpectedly, Anand does not meet the challenge in the best way.



17...♗xd3?!

A big concession! Now Leko obtains a real advantage – he is granted a precious tempo to develop his initiative. There were no reasons for panic – 17...b6! I do not see any dangerous continuation for White: 18.♗xf5 (18.a4 ♗d6=; 18.♕c2 A tempo! 18...♗xd3

19.♕xd3 ♗xa3!? 20.♘g5 g6 21.♘e4 ♗e7 22.d5 f5∞) 18...♕xf5 19.♗g3 ♘a5=.

18.♕xd3⩲ b6 19.d5 ♗f6 20.c4

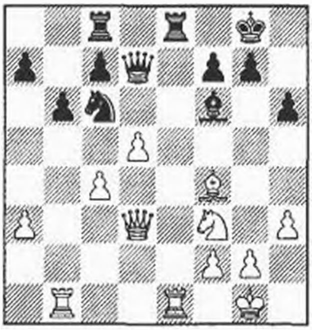
Anand's position is rather unpleasant as his minor pieces are deprived of activity.

20...h6

Black both creates "luft" for the king and escapes the constant necessity to reckon with the white knight's jump to g5.

21.h3

White seems to have relaxed too early – he had no need to take care of the safety of the back rank! Rather, it was time for White to look for ways to realise the potential of his actively placed pieces. The best way is 21.♖bd1! threatening to capture the knight. 21...♘e7 22.♗e5 ♗xe5 23.♘xe5 ♕d6 (23...♕f5!? 24.♕g3!±) 24.♕f3 f6 25.♘g4±, and the weakness of the black king is rather noticeable.



21...♖e7!?

An interesting defensive resource, though it looks quite awkward! It is a bit risky to leave the knight in such an "interesting" position but its transfer to a5 would have left the initiative to White: 21...♘a5 22.♘e5! (Now White can exchange the knight for the black bishop, as the white knight has withdrawn too far from the battlefield, i.e. the kingside). 22...♗xe5 23.♗xe5 ♘c6 24.♗xg7 ♔xg7 25.♕c3+ ♔h7 26.dxc6 ♕xc6 27.♖bd1±

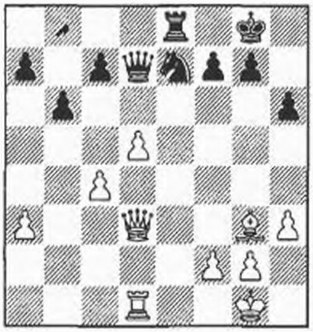
22.♖bd1 ♖d8

Doubling the rooks is dangerous for Black: 22...♖ce8 23.♖xe7 ♘xe7 24.♖e1!, and the knight is pinned to the e7-square because of the possible loss of the c7-pawn.

23.♖xe7 ♘xe7 24.♘e5

This move could have led to a quick draw, but probably Leko has let the advantage slip already. 24.♖e1 c6 25.♗e5 cxd5 (25...♗xe5?! 26.♘xe5 ♕c7 27.♕f3 f6 28.♘xc6 ♘xc6 29.dxc6±) 26.♗xf6 gxf6 27.♖d1=∞. It is too late to exchange bishops: 24.♗e5 ♗xe5 25.♘xe5 ♕f5! (A precise decision. There was much suffering in store for Black in case of a different queen move: 25...♕d6 26.♖e1 f6 27.♘g4 c6 28.♘e3 – 28.♕e4 ♔f8 29.♕h7 cxd5 30.cxd5 ♕xa3∞ – 28...b5 29.cxb5 cxd5 30.♘c2 ♖c8 31.♘d4±) 26.♕g3 (The following exchanges are no good for White: 26.♘c6 ♕xd3 27.♘xe7+ ♔f8 28.♖xd3 ♔xe7 and the white pawns are about to fall prey to the black king) 26...♕e4=.

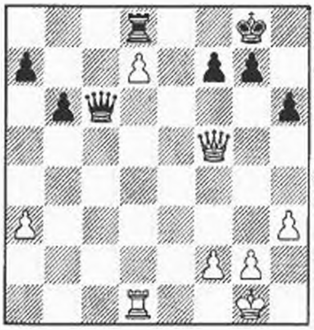
24...♗xe5 25.♗xe5 ♖e8 26.♗g3



26...♘f5?!

I guess this is an error. In a quite satisfactory position Anand would never have let intentionally the enemy have such a dangerous passed pawn. A quick draw could follow after the accurate 26...♘c8!=. The knight transfer to the d6-square would dispel all hopes for victory that White might have had.

27.♗xc7! ♕xc7 28.♕xf5± ♕xc4 29.d6 ♖d8 30.d7 ♕c6



A dangerous situation for Black! In essence, the pawn on d7 deprives Black of useful moves. Therefore, Anand agrees to give up his two queenside pawns in order to get rid of the formidable passed pawn.

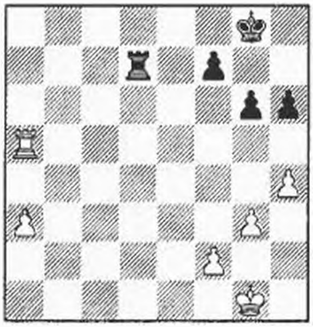
31.g3 a6 32.h4 b5 33.♖d5 a5

A pawn sacrifice. Let me show one of the possible variations which shows how difficult Black's position has become: 33...♕c1+ 34.♔h2 ♕xa3?? 35.♖e5 ♕f8 (35...♔f8 36.♕h7+-) 36.♕e4 f5 37.♖xf5 ♕d6 38.♕e8+-.

34.♖xb5 g6 35.♕d5 ♕xd7 36.♕xd7 ♖xd7 37.♖xa5

(diagram)

Play has entered an endame that is unpleasant but defendable for Black. The pawn should be placed on h5, the rook should be transferred to a1 or a2, the king should move between the g7-f6-squares. Sooner or later the white king will have to abandon the kingside pawns (if he does not agree to a draw immediately) and the black rook will take them. Then the black rook will offer itself up in sacrifice for White's passed pawn. Meanwhile, the black kingside pawns will have moved up the board and it will be hard for the white king to cope with them from the queenside... A draw, to put it briefly.



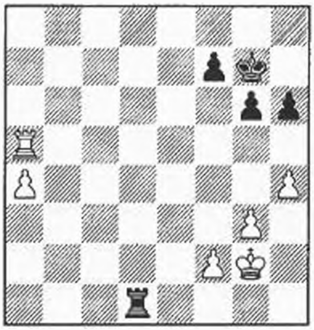
37...♔g7?!

What for? 37...h5.

38.a4

Anand's inaccuracy was not a blunder and does not yet lead to defeat: 38.g4 ♖d4 39.f3 h5=; 38.h5 gxh5 39.♖xh5 ♖a7=

38...♖d1+ 39.♔g2



And now something unimaginable happens – again Anand does not play h6-h5!

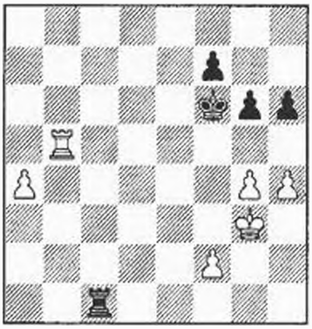
39...♖a1?

39...h5 40.♖a8 ♖a1±

40.g4!

That's it. Leko knows how to use Anand's "present". The winning method is written in any endgame manual.

40...♔f6 41.♔g3 ♖c1 42.♖b5



42...g5?

What has happened to Anand? He turned a drawing position into a lost one and now he gives the ideal f5-square to the white rook. From this square the rook secures the kingside and supports the passed pawn. Anand should have taken his chances with waiting moves and hoped for another chance. Leko would have had to exercise caution and demonstrate precise calculation. In the position now on the board (after another of Anand's strange moves) the technique of a skilful first-class player would be enough to win.

43.♖f5+ ♔g6 44.h5+ ♔g7 45.a5 ♖a1 46.♔g2 ♖e1 47.f3 ♖e6 48.♔f2 ♔f8 49.♖b5 ♔g7 50.♖f5 ♔f8 51.♖c5 ♔g7 52.♖b5 ♔f8 53.♖b6 ♖e5 54.a6 ♔g7 55.a7 ♖a5 56.♖b7 ♖a3 57.♔e2 ♔f6 58.♔d2 ♔e6 59.♔c2 f6 60.♔b2 ♖a4 61.♔b3 ♖a1 62.♔b4 ♔d6 63.♖h7 ♔e5 64.♔b5 ♖a2 65.♔b6 ♔d5 1–0

Anand realised that he was losing the rook and resigned. Chess history knows a lot of examples when outstanding players astonished the world by their failures in the ending. One wise grandmaster suggested the following theory to explain it: "They have a perfectly polished technique to realise advantages as they play so many winning games; however their technique in defence is weaker as they have such limited exerience playing inferior endings". This theory explains a lot!

130 **E12**

Radjabov – Kramnik

Round 13 8.03

Notes by D. Yevseev

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 b6 4.♘c3 ♗b7 5.a3 d5 6.cxd5 ♘xd5 7.♕c2 ♘xc3 8.bxc3 c5 9.e4 ♘d7 10.♗f4 ♗e7 11.d5?!

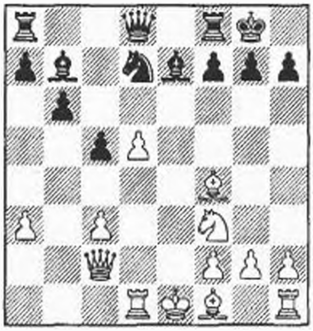
This move is quite rare and the statistics is definitely not in its favour. I do not like it either – White starts active actions early before completing his development. On the other hand this move has been tried by players like Krasenkow and Lputian and that should be taken into account. The line 11.♗d3 is more natural and logical and according to the statistics White should be more optimistic indeed.

11...exd5 12.exd5 0–0

It is extremely risky for Black to take that pawn 12...♗xd5?! 13.♖d1

♗xf3 (13...♗e6 14.♗a6! 0–0 15.♗b7± and White wins the exchange. It is not so clear for White to play 14.♗b5 a6 15.♗xd7+ ♗xd7 16.♘e5 ♖a7 17.♘c6 ♗xc6 18.♖xd8+ ♗xd8 19.0–0 0–0 and the position is approximately equal.) 14.gxf3 (threatening 15.♗b5 as well as 15.♗h3) 14...a6 15.♗h3 ♖a7 16.0–0 0–0. This looks too dangerous for Black, but what else can he play? (In case of 16...♕a8 the black king remains stranded in the centre and that is even more perilous – 17.♗xd7+ ♖xd7 18.♖xd7 ♔xd7 19.♕d3+ ♔e8 20.♖e1 ♔f8 21.♕d7 ♕e8 22.♖xe7!+–) 17.♖fe1! and the pin is so dangerous for Black that he is doomed to lose some material in the end.

13.♖d1



13...g5!?

Vladimir Kramnik demonstrates once again his immense opening erudition. This move in fact has been played before – Black is trying suddenly to seize the initiative exploiting his temporary lead in development.

14.♗e3 g4 15.♘g1N

The first test of this line happened in the game Lputian – Adorjan, Hastings 1986, and there after 15.♘d2 f5 16.h3 f4 17.hxg4 ♗h4 18.♘f3 fxe3 19.♖xh4 exf2+ 20.♕xf2 ♕e7+ the position was double-edged.

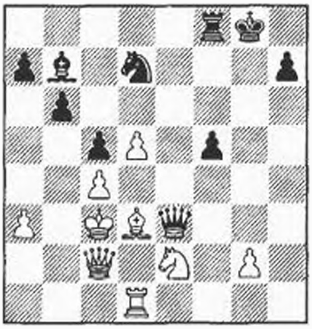
15...f5 16.h3

It was interesting for White to try 16.♗d3!? f4! 17.♗xh7+ ♔h8 18.♗c1 ♗h4!?=∞.

16...♗g5 17.hxg4 ♗xe3 18.fxe3 ♕g5 19.♗d3 ♖ae8 20.♘e2 ♕xe3 21.c4

Black's attack is just overwhelming after the attractive move 21.♗xf5? – 21...♖xf5! 22.gxf5 ♗a6 23.c4 (Black's threats are irresistible after 23.♖d2 ♘e5 24.♖h3? ♕g1+!! 25.♘xg1 ♘d3+ 26.♔d1 ♖e1#; 24.♖f1 ♘d3+ 25.♔d1 ♘f2+ 26.♔e1 ♘e4 27.f6 ♔f7–+; 24.♔d1 ♘d3 25.♖f1 – see 24.♖f1) 23...♕g3+ 24.♔d2 (White's king will not find a safe haven on the kingside either: 24.♔f1 ♕g4 25.♖c1 ♖e4!?; 25.♖h3 ♗xc4 26.♖d2 ♘f6, and Black's threats are really dangerous.) 24...♕g4 25.♖de1 ♘e5! (25...♗xc4 26.♘c3!) 26.♔c1 ♘xc4, and Black has powerful threats.

21...♕g3+ 22.♔d2 ♕xg4 23.♖h3 ♕g5+ 24.♔c3 ♖e3 25.♖xe3 ♕xe3



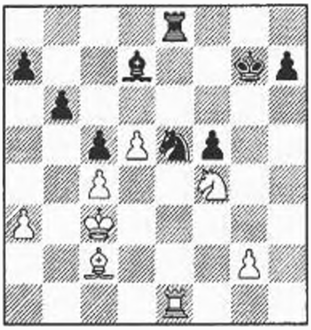
26.♕d2!

White goes into an endgame with a pawn down, but that is a quite correct decision because his king is definitely more vulnerable than its black counterpart.

26...♕xd2+ 27.♔xd2∓ ♗c8 28.♘f4 ♘e5 29.♖e1 ♖e8 30.♔c3 ♗d7 31.♗c2

Black has serious problems to press his advantage home. His kingside pawns are weak and White has a powerful trump card – the protected central passed pawn.

31...♔g7



32.♘h5+!?

White is trying to rearrange his pieces in order to prevent the march forward of the black king: ♔f6-g5 etc.

32...♔g6 33.♘g3 ♔g5 34.♖f1 ♖f8

White obtains excellent counterplay after the activation of the black rook: 34...♘g4 35.♘xf5 ♖e2 36.♗d3 ♖xg2 37.♘d6⇄.

35.♘e4+ ♔g6 36.a4 ♘f7! 37.♘d2 ♖e8 38.♘f3 ♘d6

Black managed to redeploy his forces perfectly: the knight occupied the excellent blocking d6-square and the rook was dominating the only open file, nevertheless it was still very difficult for Black to win that game.

39.♗d3 ♔f6 40.♖a1

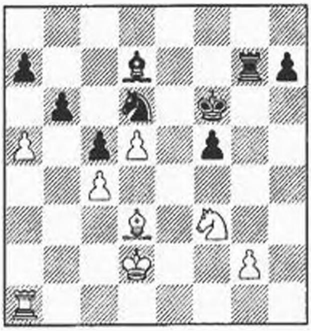
40.♖h1!? ♔g6 41.♖a1.

40...♖e3

This was the last move of the time-control. Black had nothing much after 40...♖g8 41.♖h1.

41.♔d2 ♖e7 42.a5 ♖g7!

White achieves the long programmed push of the a-pawn, but now he has the difficult task of defending the g2-pawn. After 42...b5 43.cxb5 ♗xb5 44.♗xb5 ♘xb5 45.♔d3 ♘d6 46.♖h1 White has good drawing chances.



43.axb6!

This was obviously the correct decision for White. He sacrificed a second pawn, but he got rid of one of his weaknesses and activated his pieces. It was useless to play 43.♗f1?! b5 44.cxb5 ♗xb5+ and the bishop that just managed to defend the weak pawn would be promptly exchanged. It is more logical to defend the pawn with 43.♘e1, but after 43...b5 44.cxb5 ♗xb5 45.♗xb5 ♘xb5 46.♔d3 (46.♖c1 ♘d6!+) 46...♘d6+ White might lose because of the passive placement of the knight on g1 – for example White cannot play 47.♖h1.

43...♖xg2+ 44.♔e3 axb6 45.♖b1 h5?!

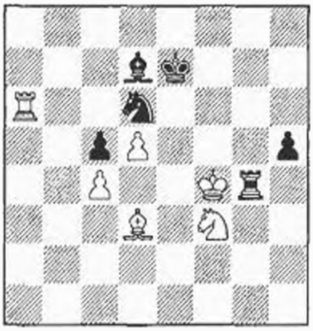
This is really a very strange decision – Black forces a draw having two extra pawns. In case of 45...♘c8 46.♖h1 it looks like the draw is again inevitable, because Black must part with his h-pawn because 46...♔g7? does not work (or 46...♖g7 47.♖h6+ ♔e7 48.♘e5

♘d6 49.♔f4) 47.♘e5, and Black loses both his extra pawns. Black could have still tried to play for a win with 45...b5!? 46.cxb5 c4 47.b6!? (47.♗f1 f4+!? 48.♔d4 ♖f2; 48.♔xf4 ♖g4+ 49.♔e3 ♗xb5+) 47...♗c8 (47...cxd3!? 48.b7 ♘xb7 49.♖xb7 ♔e7) 48.♗f1 ♖g4.

46.♖xb6 ♔e7 47.♖a6

This is aimed at attacking the c5-pawn with 48.♖a5, or creating some threats against the black king with 48.♖a7 followed by 49.♘e5.

47...f4+ 48.♔xf4 ♖g4+ ½ – ½



A draw was agreed to here, because after 49.♔e3 (But please not 49.♔e5?? ♘f7#) 49...♘xc4+ 50.♗xc4 ♖xc4 51.♖h6 (51.♘e5 ♖d4) 51...♗e8 52.♘e5 Black has no winning chances whatsoever.

131 **B72**

Anand – Kasparov

Round 14 9.03

Notes by A. Khalifman

This game was played in the last round and Kasparov needed to win it in order to tie with Kramnik and Leko. As for Anand, he had the same number of points as Kasparov at that moment, but his psychological state of mind was a bit shattered. He lost in the previous round a slightly worse but still quite defendable endgame to Leko and he had already lost his game with Kasparov in the first part of the round-robin. So, the key-moment was whether Anand was really prepared to fight to the end.

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♘c3 g6

Garry is aiming at a tough game! The Dragon variation is much more complex than the more conventional lines 3...e5 or 3...♘f6.

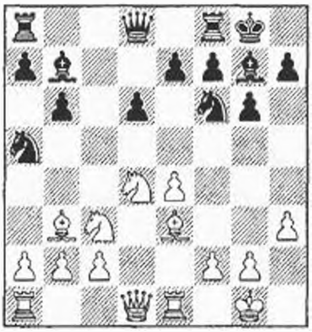
4.d4 cxd4 5.♘xd4 ♗g7 6.♗e3 ♘f6 7.♗c4 0–0 8.♗b3 d6 9.h3

This move showed already that Anand was not inclined to argue in the sharp theoretical lines after 9.f3, followed by White castling long.

9...♘a5

This is not the most popular move. 9...♗d7 is Black's most preferred choice in the majority of the games.

10.0–0 b6 11.♖e1 ♗b7



12.♗g5

This was played in some games before. White is slightly better and Black does not seem to have a lot of counter chances. However, he has some typical Dragon ideas like ♖a8-c8-c3! or ♘a5-c4 at his disposal in some lines.

12...♘xb3

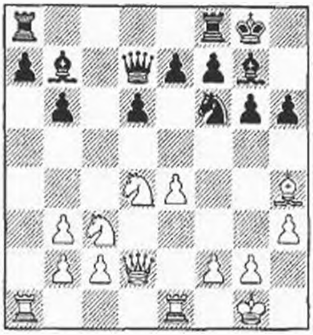
Black could have delayed that exchange for a while with 12...♖c8!?, preserving the possibilities that we mentioned in our previous notes.

13.axb3 h6 14.♗h4 ♕d7!

White gets a slight advantage after 14...a6 15.♘d5 e6 (or 15...♘xd5 16.exd5 ♖e8 (Black cannot capture on d5 after 16...g5 17.♗g3, because of ♘f5 – that is the idea behind the move ♕d7!) 17.c4 ♕d7 18.♕d3⩲ Ye Jiangchuan – Fedorov, Istanbul 2000) 16.♘xf6+ ♗xf6 17.♗xf6 ♕xf6 18.♕d2±.

15.♕d2

White cannot play 15.♘d5? anymore, because of 15...♘xd5 16.exd5 g5 17.♗g3 ♗xd5∓. Some time later after this game White tested here 15.f3 ♖fd8 (15...♘h5!? deserved attention) 16.♕d2 e5 17.♗xf6 ♗xf6 18.♘db5 ♗g5 19.♕d3 a6 20.♘a3 b5⇄ and Black had a good counterplay in the game Naiditsch – Leko, Dortmund 2003.



15...♘h5!

Black starts an offensive. He is threatening g6-g5 now.

16.f3

White needs to take care of his remaining bishop.

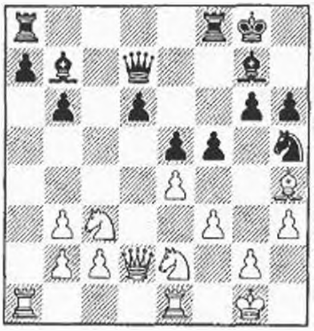
16...e5!?

This is fairly aggressive and very creative too. Black is aiming at opening files in the center after f7-f5. The position after that move would be a bit similar to the Cheljabinsk variation. Black's pieces are very active but the d6-pawn is vulnerable.

17.♘de2

It is not good for White to play 17.♘db5 d5! 18.exd5 a6 19.♘a3 b5=∞ – and the knight on a3 would be completely out of play.

17...f5



18.♖ed1?

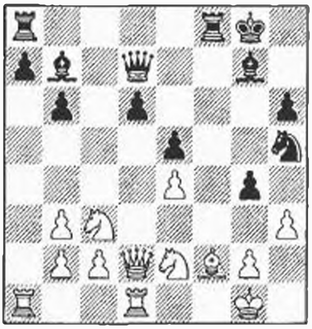
This is a serious imprecision and Black seizes the initiative after it. White had to trade pawns first – 18.exf5! gxf5 19.♖ed1! e4 20.fxe4 fxe4 21.♕xd6 ♕xd6 (the move 21...♕f7 is already senseless due to 22.♖f1) 22.♖xd6 ♘f4 23.♘xf4 ♖xf4=∞ – Black has some compensation for the pawn indeed, but still he has to fight for a draw. Should Black capture on f5 with the queen after – 18...g5 19.♗f2 ♕xf5, White preserves his initiative with: 20.♕xd6 (it is also interesting for him to play 20.♘b5, for example: 20...d5 21.♘c7 ♖ac8 22.♘xd5 ♕xc2 23.♕xc2 ♖xc2 24.♘e7+ ♔f7 25.♖xa7 ♖b8 26.♘f5 and White is better) 20...♕xc2 (but not

20...e4 21.♘d4 ♗xd4 22.♕xd4 exf3 23.g4!, and White wins – Anand.) 21.♕e6+ ♔h8 22.♕e7 ♗c6 23.♖xa7 ♕xb3 24.♖xa8 (24.♖c7!?) 24...♗xa8 25.♕a3 ♕e6 26.♕a7, and Black must still prove that his compensation for the eventual loss of the b6-pawn would be sufficient.

18...fxe4 19.fxe4 g5

Black continues to play in the manner "everything forward". It was more prudent for him to continue with 19...♘f4 avoiding the weakening of the f5-square.

20.♗f2 g4



21.h4

It was too risky for White to capture the pawn here – 21.♕xd6 ♕f7 22.♗e3 gxh3→, because his king would have been quite exposed.

21...♘f4 22.♕xd6

This again does not look like the most accurate move, because the arising position is in favour of Black. White probably had better try 22.♗g3, in order to repel the black knight away from the f4-square. Another interesting idea for White is to play here 22.♘g3, with the idea to exploit later the weakness of the f5-square.

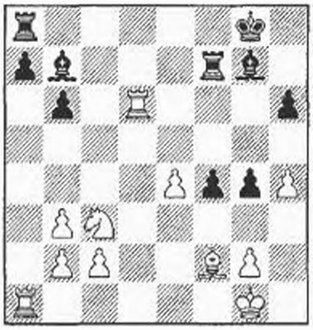
22...♕f7!

This is another very ambitious move. After 22...♕xd6 23.♖xd6 ♘xe2+ 24.♘xe2 ♗xe4 25.c4 White should be able to save the endgame.

23.♘xf4 exf4 24.♕d7

Anand avoids just like before the complications arising after: 24.♗d4 ♖ad8 25.♕b4 ♖xd4 26.♖xd4 f3. It looks like he is once again absolutely right, since White would have great difficulties after: 27.♕c4 (27.♖d2 ♕f4 28.♖f2 ♕g3, with the powerful threat ♗e5.) 27...♗xd4+ 28.♕xd4 ♕f4! 29.♖f1 ♗a6 30.♘d5 (it is not good for White to play 30.♖f2 ♕c1+ 31.♕d1 ♕xd1+ 32.♘xd1 ♗e2 33.♘c3 g3∓, and Black wins the exchange) 30...♕g3 31.♖f2 (31.♕f2 ♕e5 32.c4 g3 33.♕d2 f2+ 34.♔h1 ♕h5–+) 31...♕xh4 32.e5 fxg2 33.♖xf8+ ♔xf8, with an advantage for Black.

24...♕xd7 25.♖xd7 ♖f7 26.♖d6



26...♔h7?!

White is out of the woods now.

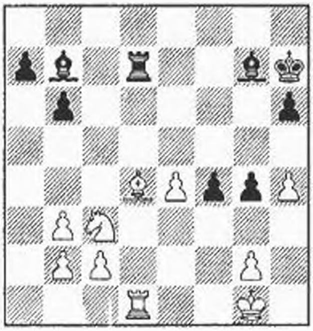
His defensive task would have been much harder after 26...g3! 27.♗d4 ♗f8, with the idea to repel the white rook from the d-file. After 28.♖g6+ ♔h7 29.h5 (Anand) 29...♖d8↑ Black would have excellent attacking chances despite the rather reduced material: 30.♖f6 ♖xf6 31.♗xf6 ♖d2! 32.♖xa7 f3! 33.♖xb7+ ♔g8, and White is helpless against Black's passed pawns: 34.b4 ♖xg2+ 35.♔f1 ♖f2+ 36.♔g1 (36.♔e1 ♖h2–+) 36...♖xc2 37.♖d7 (37.♘d1 ♖g2+ 38.♔f1 ♖d2 39.♘e3 ♖h2 40.♔g1 f2+ 41.♔f1 ♖h1+ 42.♔g2 ♖g1+ 43.♔f3 f1♕+ 44.♘xf1 ♖xf1–+) 37...♖g2+ 38.♔f1 ♖h2 39.♗d4 ♖h1+ 40.♗g1 f2 41.♘e2 fxg1♕+ 42.♘xg1 ♖h2 and the threats ♖f2+ and ♗b4+ are impossible to parry.

It is more precise for White to play 29.♖f6, in order to trade the rooks before the other black rook has reached the d8-square – 29...♖xf6 (29...♖d7 30.♖xf4 ♖xd4 31.♖f7+ ♔g6 32.♖xb7 ♗c5 33.♔h1 ♖d2=∞) 30.♗xf6 ♗c5+ 31.♔h1 a5 32.♖d1 – and in both cases the fact that the white king is totally isolated on h1 compensates Black's pawn deficit.

27.♖ad1 ♖e8

After 27...♗xc3 28.bxc3 (or 28.♖d7 ♖af8 29.bxc3 ♗xe4 30.♖xf7+ ♖xf7 31.h5 g3 32.♗d4 ♖f5 33.♖a1 a5 34.♗xb6 ♖xh5 35.♖a4) 28...g3 29.♗d4 ♗xe4 30.♖e1 ♖e8 the most probable outcome of the game would have been again a draw.

28.♖d7 ♖ec7 29.♖xe7 ♖xe7 30.♗d4 ♖d7



31.♘d5

This move is forcing the draw.

31...♗xd5 32.♗xg7 ♗c6 ½ – ½

The opponents agreed to a draw, because of the arising endgame with opposite coloured bishops. One must admit that Kasparov fought hard, but he was not quite successful throughout the entire tournament anyway.

132 B30

Kramnik – Leko

Round 14 9.03

The two leaders were against each other in this game, having 6.5 out of 11. The tie-breaks were in favour of Leko, so this was Kramnik's last chance to win the tournament. Peter defended really well (note especially 16...b6!) and won deservedly his first title at Linares.

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♘c3

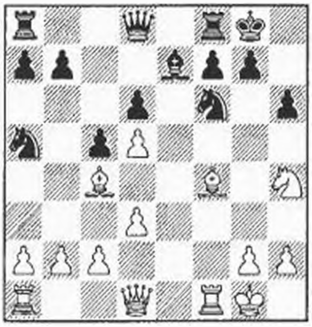
Is this going to be named the "Linares variation" after this tournament?!

3...e5 4.♗c4 d6 5.d3 ♗e7 6.0–0 ♘f6 7.♘g5 0–0 8.f4 exf4

This is the traditional move. Radjabov played instead 8...♗g4 against Ponomariov in round 10.

9.♗xf4 h6 10.♘f3 ♗e6 11.♘d5 ♗xd5 12.exd5 ♘a5 13.♘h4

This highly topical line was tested a couple of times in the last Israeli Championships. So probably Vladimir was more aggressive than expected. White intends to place his knight on f5 and his threats might become really dangerous then. This move was tested for the first time in the game Kovalev – Sveshnikov, Rowy 1999. All games played in this line after that confirmed the fact that White was clearly better.



13...♘xc4

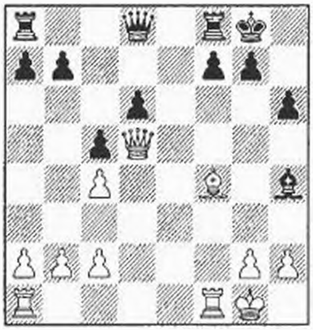
This is the correct decision for Black. He intends to exchange a couple of pieces in order to reduce White's attacking potential. For example after 13...b5 White sacrifices two pieces in a row and organizes quickly a winning attack: 14.♘f5! bxc4 15.♗xh6! gxh6 16.♘xh6+ ♔h7 17.♘f5 cxd3 (17...♖e8 18.♖f3 ♗f8 19.♖h3+ ♔g6 20.♕f3 ♖e5 21.♖f1+−; 17...♖h8 18.♖f3 ♗f8 19.♖g3 ♕b6 20.♕f3 ♕xb2 21.♖f1+−) 18.♕xd3 ♔h8 19.♖ae1 ♕b6 20.♕h3+ ♘h7 21.♖xe7 c4+ 22.♔h1 ♕xb2 23.♖e4 ♖g8 24.♕xh7+ 1–0 Sutovsky – Smirin, Tel Aviv 2002, and Black resigned because of the forced checkmate in five after: 24...♔xh7 25.♖h4+ ♔g6 26.♖h6+ ♔g5 27.h4+ ♔g4 28.♘e3+ ♔g3 29.♖f3#. Black cannot solve his problems with 13...♕d7 either, since after 14.♗xh6!? ♘xc4 (it is disastrous for Black to play 14...♘g4 15.♗b5! ♕c8 16.♘f5+− Sebe – Barnaure, Bucharest 2003) 15.♘f5 gxh6 16.dxc4 ♖fe8 17.♘xh6+ ♔g7 18.♕d2, White had an overwhelming attack. The game ended rather quickly: 18...♖g8 19.♘f5+ ♔h8 20.♘xe7 ♕xe7 21.♖ae1 ♕d8 22.♕h6+ ♘h7 23.♖xf7 ♖xg2+ 24.♔h1 ♕g8 25.♖xh7+ ♕xh7 26.♕xh7+ ♔xh7 27.♔xg2 ♖g8+ 28.♔f3 ♖f8+ 29.♔g3 ♖g8+ 30.♔h3 1–0 Gallagher – Heidrich, Germany 2003.

14.dxc4 ♘xd5N

This move was recommended by GM A.Kovalev. 14...g5 looks extremely dangerous, due to 15.♘f5 gxf4 16.♖xf4 ♖e8 17.♘xh6+ ♔g7 (17...♔f8 18.♕g4!) 18.♕f3 ♔xh6 19.♖h4+ ♔g6 20.♖f1+−, while after 14...♕d7? in the game Kovalev – Sveshnikov, Rowy 1999, White had a powerful attack after: 15.♗d2!± ♕g4 (15...♘e4 16.♘f5 ♘xd2 17.♕g4+−; 15...♘xd5 16.♘f5 ♘f6 17.♕e1+− Kovalev) 16.♘f5.

15.♕xd5 ♗xh4

This line is maybe good enough for a draw, maybe not... White is definitely slightly better, but it is hardly enough...



16.♖ad1!

Peter's opening choice in this game "Don't impress me much" now. White can go on playing for a win without any risk. Leko thought over the position here for a long time acknowledging that he was not happy at all.

16...b6!

This was a good choice, because at least Black did not need to think about the weak b7 and c5-pawns anymore. Or 16...♗e7 17.♖d3 and White would have some attacking prospects on the kingside.

17.♗xd6

Peter pointed out later that White would not have achieved anything in particular after 17.♕h5 ♗f6 18.♗xd6 ♗d4+ 19.♖xd4 cxd4 20.♗xf8 ♕xf8 21.♕d5 ♖d8 22.♖xf7 ♖xd5 23.♖xf8+ ♔xf8 24.cxd5 ♔e7 25.♔f2 ♔d6 26.♔f3 ♔xd5=.

17...♗e7 18.♗e5 ♗g5!?

This is a good move. It seems now like Black has solved finally all his problems. White would have preserved some edge after 18...♕xd5 19.cxd5±.

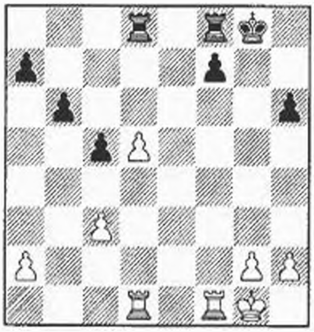
19.♗d6

White could play here the move 19.♕f3!?, with some interesting lines to follow, for example 19...♕e7 20.♖de1 ♖ae8 21.♕g3! ♕d7! 22.h4 ♖xe5 23.♕xe5 ♗xh4⇄ (Leko). It would have been extremely hard for White then to press his material advantage home.

19...♗e7 20.♗f4 ♗f6! 21.c3 ♕xd5 22.cxd5 ♖ad8

White is still a little better, but is it enough to win?

23.♗xh6!? ♗xc3 24.bxc3 gxh6



25.♖fe1

White still has a slight advantage and he can win against a not so strong opponent as it happened for example in the last European Team Championships: 25.c4 ♖fe8 26.♖fe1 ♖xe1+ 27.♖xe1 b5 28.cxb5 ♖xd5 29.a4 ♖d4 30.a5 ♖a4 31.♖e8+ ♔g7 32.a6 ♔f6 33.♔f2 ♖a5 34.♖b8 ♔e5 35.♖b7 f5 36.♖xa7 ♖xb5 37.♖a8 ♖b2+ 38.♔e3 ♖b3+ 39.♔e2 ♖b2+ 40.♔d3 ♔f4 41.a7 ♖a2 42.g4!+− Gallagher – Van Beers, Plovdiv 2003.

25...♖d7 26.c4 a6!

Black intends to obtain a couple of connected passed pawns. He had to refrain from 26...b5? 27.cxb5 ♖b8 28.a4.

27.a4

The game should also end in a draw after 27.♖b1 b5 28.cxb5 axb5 29.♖xb5 ♖xd5=

27...b5! 28.axb5 axb5 29.cxb5 ♖b8

The draw outcome is evident and unavoidable now.

30.d6 ♖xb5 31.♖e7 ♖bb7 32.♖xd7 ♖xd7 33.♔f2 ♔g7 34.♔f3 ♔f6 35.♖d5 ½ – ½

(Comments based on the Internet live coverage by A.Khalifman)

133 E18

Vallejo Pons – Ponomariov

Round 14 9.03

Notes by A. Khalifman

1.♘f3 ♘f6 2.d4 e6 3.c4 b6 4.g3 ♗b7 5.♗g2 ♗e7 6.0–0 0–0 7.♘c3 ♘e4 8.♗d2 ♗f6 9.♕c2

This is a bit too solid. 9.♖c1 as played by Kasparov against Ponomariov in Round 5 was much more aggressive.

9...♘xd2 10.♕xd2 d6 11.♖fd1

White's other possible plan is 11.♖fe1 intending some active play on the kingside.

11...♘d7 12.b4N

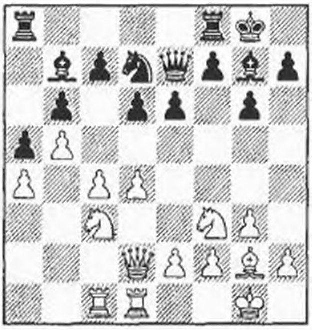
This is a new move although it is

generally a part of White's plan. 12.d5 e5 13.e4 has been tested in this position before. It is probably best for White to close the centre before the beginning of his active operations on the queenside.

12...g6 13.a4 a5 14.b5

Closing of the queenside does not look correct here. White's active chances seem to be at that wing and now they are almost gone. The usual move 12.d5 promises White better prospects than Vallejo's novelty.

14...♗g7 15.♖ac1 ♕e7



16.♕g5!?

It looks like Paco is not dreaming about winning that position. His last move seems to be a silent draw offer.

16...♘f6 17.♘e1

White's attempts to simplify go on undisturbed.

17...♗xg2 18.♘xg2 ♖ac8 19.♘e4

This is the same policy time and again. White could have tried to play an interesting middlegame after 19.e4!?.

19...♖fd8 20.♘e3 h6 21.♘xf6+ ♕xf6 22.♕xf6 ♗xf6

The arising endgame is approximately equal, since neither side can improve the position considerably.

23.c5

This is White's first step in the wrong direction. He had better postpone c4-c5 for a couple of moves with 23.♔g2.

23...dxc5 24.dxc5 ♗g5 25.c6

The move 25.f4 will be countered by Black with 25...♗e7, with the idea to follow that with ♗c5.

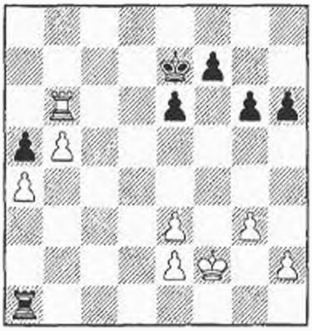
25...♔f8

It was even simpler for Black to play 25...♗xe3 26.fxe3 ♔f8=.

26.♖d7?!

This is still not losing, but White must fight for a draw now. It was clearly better for him to play 26.f4 and he would even have some symbolic edge.

26...♗xe3 27.fxe3 ♖xd7 28.cxd7 ♖d8 29.♖xc7 ♔e7 30.♖b7 ♖xd7 31.♖xb6 ♖d1+ 32.♔f2 ♖a1



33.♖b7+?

This imprecise move is going to cause a lot of problems for White. It was possible to make an easy draw with: 33.e4! e5 (or 33...♖xa4 34.e5 ♖b4 35.♖b7+ ♔d8 36.b6= – and the material is equal) 34.♖b7+ ♔e6 (Black is losing too many pawns on the kingside after 34...♔d6?! 35.♖xf7 ♖xa4 36.♖f6+) 35.♖b6=.

33...♔d6!

This was quite unexpected.

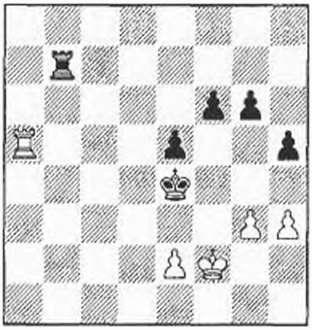
34.♖b6+

The point is that White fails to capture on f7 – 34.♖xf7 ♖xa4 35.♖a7 ♔c5 36.♖a6 ♔xb5 37.♖xe6 ♖b4+ 38.♖xg6 – and Black will manage to promote his pawn and stop White's passed pawns on the kingside: 38...a4 39.♖xh6 a3 40.♖h8 a2 41.♖b8+ ♔c4 42.♖a8 ♔b3 43.♖xa2 ♔xa2 44.h4 ♔b3 45.h5 ♔c4 46.g4 ♔d5 47.♔f3 ♔e5–+. It becomes clear at the end that White has lost a couple of tempi on useless checks.

34...♔d5 35.e4+

White has to give up a pawn now in order to prevent the black king from capturing White's passed b-pawn.

35...♔xe4 36.♖a6 ♖xa4 37.b6 e5 38.b7 ♖b4 39.♖a7 h5 40.h3 f6 41.♖xa5 ♖xb7



So now Vallejo has to defend a highly unpleasant version of a three against four, rook and pawn endgame.

42.♖a4+ ♔f5 43.e4+

It would have been much better for White to defend with a pawn on e2, since now the e4-pawn becomes a weakness.

43...♔g5 44.♖a6 ♖f7!

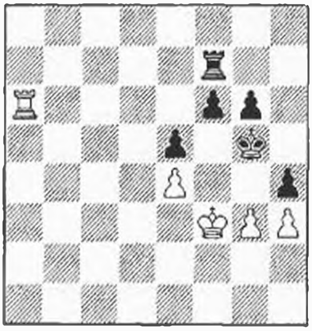
Black is threatening h5-h4.

45.♔f3

Black would have more problems to press his advantage home after 45.♖a8 h4 (in case of 45...♖h7 White could play 46.h4+ ♔g4 47.♖g8 g5 48.♖g6, and his chances to make a draw were quite considerable, for example: 48...♖a7 49.♖xf6 ♖a2+ 50.♔e3 gxh4 51.♖g6+ ♔h3 52.gxh4 ♔xh4 53.♖e6 ♖a5 54.♖g6, and the black king cannot be repelled easily from the h-file, or 50.♔g1 gxh4 51.♖g6+ ♔f3 52.gxh4 ♖a1+ 53.♔h2 ♔xe4 54.♖g5 ♔f4 55.♖xh5 e4 56.♖h8 e3 57.♖f8+ ♔e4 58.♖e8+ ♔f3 59.♖f8+ ♔e2 60.♔h3 – and White will manage to promote his own pawn after he loses his rook. The other possibility leads to a simple draw after: 51...♔h3 52.♖g5 hxg3 53.♖xh5+ ♔g4 54.♖xe5=.) 46.gxh4+ ♔f4 (Black cannot win after 46...♔xh4 47.♖h8+ ♔g5 48.♔f3 48...f5 49.h4+ ♔f6 50.h5 and White exchanges pawns while his e4-pawn is well protected) 47.♖g8 ♔xe4 48.♖xg6 ♔f5 49.♖g4 ♖a7 50.♔f3 (50.h5 ♖h7) 50...♖a3+ 51.♔g2∓, and White still preserves some chances to save the game.

45...h4–+

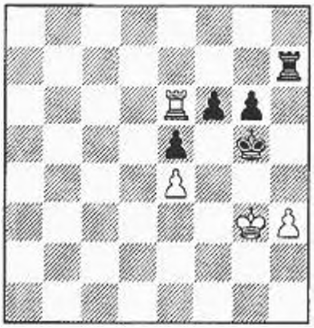
Now Black definitely has a winning position. White cannot defend effectively his two weaknesses on h3 and e4.



46.♖b6

White will fail to defend his position after 46.g4. Black plays 46...♖b7 47.♖a3 ♖b1, and in order to win he needs either to bring his king to the f4-square, or just to capture the e4-pawn. He will manage easily to do one of the two: 48.♖c3 ♖f1+ 49.♔g2 (White loses quite simply after 49.♔e3 ♖h1; as well as after 49.♔e2 ♖h1–+ – Black is threatening ♔f4, and in case of 50.♖f3 he would follow with 50...♖a1 51.♔f2 ♖a2+ 52.♔f1 ♖a4–+) 49...♖f4 50.♖e3, and now both white pieces are tied up. The black king comes right up to the e4-pawn and captures it: 50...♔h6 51.♖e2 ♔g7 52.♖e3 ♔f7 53.♖e2 ♔e6 54.♖e3 ♔d6 55.♖d3+ ♔c5–+.

46...♖h7 47.♖e6 hxg3 48.♔xg3



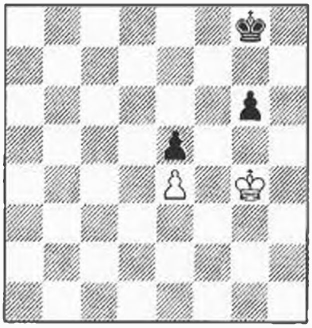
48...♖h4!

Black's calculations need to be precise although they are not so difficult...

49.♖xf6 ♖xh3+ 50.♔xh3 ♔xf6 51.♔g4

The black king needs to come to the h6-square, but meanwhile Black must avoid occupying the g7-square with his king, because White will play then ♔g5 and Black will have to come back to f7 with his king again.

51...♔f7 52.♔h4 ♔g8 53.♔g4



53...♔h7 0–1

White resigned because of the forced line: 54.♔h4 ♔h6 55.♔g4 g5 56.♔f5 ♔h5 57.♔xe5 g4 58.♔f4 ♔h4 59.e5 g3 60.e6 g2 61.e7 g1♕ 62.e8♕ ♕f2+, and he would lose his new queen.

Sparkassen Chess – Meeting

Dortmund 31.7 – 10.08, 18 cat.

			1	2	3	4	5	6	
1	Bologan	2650		= =	1 0	= =	1 =	1 1	6.5
2	Kramnik	2785	= =		= =	1 =	= =	= =	5.5
3	Anand	2774	= =	= =		0 =	= 1	1 =	5.5
4	Radjabov	2648	= =	0 =	1 =		= =	0 1	5
5	Leko	2739	0 =	= =	= 0	= =		= =	4
6	Naiditsch	2574	0 0	= =	0 =	1 0	= =		3.5

Bologan Wins on His First Attempt!

This year one of the places in the elite super-tournament was reserved for the winner of the strongest open tournament in the world – the "Aeroflot Open". So the future winner of the Dortmund tournament joined the chosen few only at the last moment and a bit luckily at that. Bologan was trailing the leader of the "Aeroflot Open" - Alexandrov – by half a point until the last round and he came in first only at the very end, and then by tie-break.

We believe that not all readers really know who Bologan is! Nevertheless, the Moldovan grandmaster is very well known among chess professionals. He is 31 years old and he has already won 28 international tournaments and among them not only such prestigious Swiss events like the "New York Open" that he won in 1997, but strong round-robins as well between category 14 and 16: Beijing – 2000, Buenos Aires – 2000 (ahead of Anatoly Karpov and Nigel Short), Shanghai – 2001, Pojkovsky 2000 and 2001, Pamplona – 2002 etc. He has been successful as a coach too. He was FIDE World Champion Ruslan Ponomariov's second at last year's Linares tournament; moreover he was even helping him in his press-conferences as Bologan is fluent in Spanish, English and French.

On the Threshold of the Dortmund Tournament

E.Atarov's interview with Viorel Bologan (after his win in the"Aeroflot – Open", February 2003, "64" #3, 2003)

Q: What do you appreciate more: your huge first prize in the "Aeroflot – Open" or the opportunity to play in the super – tournament in Dortmund?

A: The possibility to play in Dortmund is a wonderful incentive, although as a professional I must make money too! I believe that it is not good for chess that there is no system to qualify for strong round-robins. The "Aeroflot-Open" organizers deserve admiration in that they enabled at least one of us to join the chess jet-set. Until then the only chance of the so-called ordinary grandmasters was to win the "B" tournament at Wijk aan Zee in order to get the traditional place in the next year's super – tournament. The principle of qualification depending on results should be applied much more. I am very fond of tournaments in which this principle is in force, like for example, Iljumzhinov's World Championship. Everybody plays there and there are no privileges whatsoever!

Q: Are you not afraid to encounter Kramnik, Anand, Leko? Plenty of strong players are shattered to pieces in company like that...

A: First of all, nobody is immune from disasters and I remember having had terrible results in much weaker tournaments. On the other hand, I remember that my score against Leko is positive and my last two games with Kramnik ended in draws. I am not so successful against Anand but I have the experience of having played some games against him.

So I have some practice at that high level and I do not think that I will be confronted with the unknown in Dortmund. Naturally these players are numbers 2, 3 and 4 in the world while I am only number 57. These are objective facts of life. They are definitely the favourites, but I do not consider myself a helpless outsider.

Q: Do you think that there will be some objective reasons that will enable you to perform well?

A: I have cultivated a much more professional attitude towards my work; I started playing more pragmatically with a definite orientation towards a successful result! I am well concentrated on chess, my life is based on it now and I even have a strict schedule during the day too...

At the Dortmund Tournament

Atarov: "The organizers of the Dortmund super-tournament introduced their usual "novelty": the three elite grandmasters were to play against three "mere mortals". The tournament was played under really extreme conditions since it was unbelievably hot. The results of the tournament should make us think about the partially forgotten principle of qualification according to results. Had this tournament been played a long, long time ago the winner would have gained much more than just the prize money...

The Dortmund tournament is practically at the end of the competitive commercial chess season and in a way sets things straight about who is who at the very top. Kasparov's half year of inactivity and his mediocre result in Linares, combined with the successes of Leko and Kramnik as well as the brilliant performances of Anand in Wijk aan Zee and Monaco were making the results of the Sparkasse Chess-Meeting particularly intriguing on the eve of the matches for the world titles in "classical chess". The people who tried to speculate upon the eventual chances of the participants carefully avoided the theme of an eventual Scheveningen round-robin between the "strong" and the "weak", during the experimental tournament.

Most of the predictions were in favour of Anand – he had always been deadly against players with an inferior rating to his and additionally, in contrast to Kramnik and Leko, he did not need to conceal anything in the opening. Naturally the world-champion and his challenger were absolutely not to be underestimated. Moreover, Dortmund was for both Vladimir and Peter an extraordinarily lucky tournament venue, which is something that Vishy himself could not brag about at all.

The attitude towards the threesome Bologan – Radjabov – Naiditch, in that particular order, was respectful and reserved. Every one of them was expected to perform a miracle once in a while, but without any pretension to tournament victory. Sutovsky, who is considered to be an experienced oracle, predicted that the best among them – Viorel might end up with a marginal plus score if he were in a good form, unless he had some disasters in the openings. Everybody agreed that it was high time Teimour jumped a step higher. Arkady's chances were not even considered seriously – he had to think about how not to get lost among vultures like these...

The first and definitely most powerful impression about this year's German summer was the extraordinary heat. It was suffocating and scorching and it took thousands of lives all over Europe during a period of several months. It was said that such a summer had not been witnessed for more than 50 years – it rained only three times throughout the whole summer and the thermometers were showing on the average about plus 35 C all the time.

The participants as well as the organizers started the tournament in suits and ties, but were in the process of undressing right away from the beginning. Only Kramnik and Leko tried to live up to their champion's reputation and continued to be true stoics, while the Indian Anand surrendered really quickly. It seemed to everybody that he was totally devastated by the heat – he used to take out a whole pack of napkins in order to wipe his forehead and neck during the analysis. The journalists and the spectators were quick to adapt to the objective reality and started coming to the rounds in beach attire – T-shirts, shorts and flip-flops.

There were strikingly many spectators in one of the best halls in Dortmund – the Stadt Theatre (the tournament came back to this venue after its "promenade" last year to the outskirts of the city). The spectators were definitely not there just in order to find shelter from the scorching heat wave. The weather was okay during last year's tournament and the playing hall was larger and there were hardly any free seats left – it was so crowded then too! I do not think either that the reason is that there is a shortge of spectacles in Germany during this period of economic recession. Imagine - you can see everywhere, all over the place, advertisements of the World Soccer Championships that will start in a whole three years time in 2006...The true reason of the huge interest towards the tournament was that it was really exciting!" ("64" #8, 2003)

Three rounds after the start Bologan was first and Anand was last! Who could have predicted developments like that? The first half of the tournament ended with Bologan having the fantastic score 4 out of 5, Kramnik trailed him by a point and the rest of the field had 2 out of 5...The final result was that the Moldovan grandmaster Viorel Bologan, who had risen to the modest 42nd place in the world rankings, outperformed world players numbers 2, 3 and 4 – Vladimir Kramnik, Vishvanatan Anand and Peter Leko. The rookie in one of the most prestigious super-tournaments in the world won it on his first attempt!

It is maybe due to the proverbial wisdom that whoever joins a tournament at the last moment - usually wins it!

The Tournament Aftermath

Bologan: "I prepared for the tournament in the city of Sevastopol. There was nothing uncommon or supernatural in my chess preparation. I only paid a greater attention than usual to my physical preparation. Women played a vital role in my success in Dortmund – my wife Margarita as well as my daughter Katya gave me just superb psychological support during the tournament. Katya was only fourteen months old but she was so magnanimous as to agree for the first time to spend some time away from her mother – with her granny. I believe that my women are quite content that I justified their hopes and expectations with my performance at Dortmund.

Besides I had one definite advantage – my age and my experience. I was the second oldest participant in the tournament (*Anand is two years older than Bologan - SS*). I was much calmer than the rest of the field due to my experience. The idea is very simple and everybody can make good psychological use of it. You must simply play chess and forget about the usual irritants on the side. You should not be afraid to lose. It might happen that you fail to find all the best moves over the board – you should be able to control your ambitions. You should not fear anything if you want to improve. I am much more frustrated over the board if I fail to understand something, for example Kramnik outplayed me at some moment during the last round. I will have to look that game over. The more you understand this game – the greater your confidence becomes.

... After my win over Naiditch in round 6, I felt I was capable of winning the tournament. I still had my doubts though, having in mind my black pieces against Anand and Kramnik at the end.

...The world's top-ten players are of course stronger than me. Their opening preparation is much more profound than mine. They spent years preparing against each other after all! They are free to work more on chess, because they do not need to play that often and fight for prizes – they usually have excellent appearance fees! Everyone has seconds...They also have tremendous experience of playing at that level and they are capable of concentrating entirely on what is happening over the board during the game... Besides they are more talented than me! They are members of the top ten and I am not, and that should mean they are stronger. I have a long road ahead to reach that level...

I am definitely not euphoric after my achievement. It is possibly due to the accumulation of tiredness... I must have been prepared subconsciously for an achievement of that caliber, but I did not have the opportunity to play at that level yet...This victory is of course quite enjoyable but I understand that it takes just an endless effort on the road to perfection. For example I was forced to do my best in order to save the game against Kramnik in the last round and that means I have to work so much more...!"

Kramnik: "I could have beaten Bologan in the last round and I could have taken the first prize, but that would not have been a full value win. I missed my chance but that would not have changed anything concerning the conclusions I made and the lessons I learned during the tournament...

...It is unbelievably difficult to beat an excellent player who plays carefully and every time that the position might get out of control he forces a draw irrespective of the colour of pieces. I can see people starting to aim for a draw every time they play against me with White or Black. I am disappointed not so much with my result, which was not so bad after all, as with the fact that I failed to obtain fighting positions and I did not know why that was. I kept trying but it did not come out right. I was amazed that people did not try to beat me...

The only draws in this tournament that I willingly complied with were those with Black against Anand and Leko. I was playing for a win in all other games, but there was not much of a fight. It was much more annoying that I did not achieve playable fighting positions than that I failed to win. It must be that my opening repertoire is not quite in order and that worries me a lot."

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Anand – Leko

Round 1 31.07

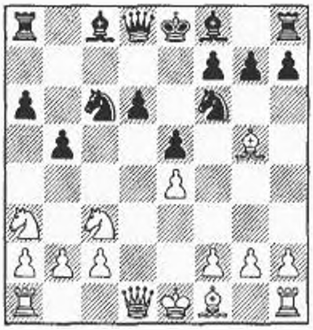
Notes by S. Shipov

The fight between the two great titans was very tense. White was not really winning at any moment of that game, but Peter Leko had to survive plenty of nasty surprises.

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 e5

The Hungarian grandmaster chooses the Sveshnikov variation once again. The brainchild of GM Sveshnikov is unbelievably popular in the chess world lately. The reason is that White regularly fails to create any real problems for Black. I believe that we are going to see that position again in this tournament...

6.♘db5 d6 7.♗g5 a6 8.♘a3 b5



9.♗xf6

This is the most principled line. The variation 9.♘d5 ♗e7 10.♗xf6 gives White some symbolic advantage indeed, but plenty of games end in a draw after that.

9...gxf6 10.♘d5 f5 11.c3 ♗g7

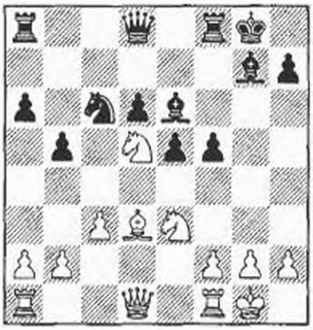
Black avoids the well familiar trap – 11...fxe4? 12.♗xb5!.

12.exf5 ♗xf5 13.♘c2 0–0 14.♘ce3 ♗e6 15.♗d3

The fight is for the complex of light squares in the middle of the board.

15...f5 16.0–0

In case White wishes to achieve a honorary draw he can play 16.♗c2 and in order to avoid a really difficult position Black is compelled to play the forced line: 16...f4 17.♕h5 ♖f7 18.♗xh7+ ♔f8 19.♗f5 ♕e8 20.♗xe6 ♕xe6 21.♕g4 ♕h6 22.♘f5 ♕e6 23.♘fe3 with a repetition of moves.



16...♖a7!

That is the only way for Black to keep his pawn chain intact. It is bad for him to play 16...♘e7? due to 17.♘xe7+ ♕xe7 18.♗xf5! and White wins material after the check on d5. The other possibility for Black is not much better either: 16...e4 17.♘f4 ♗f7 18.♗c2 ♗e5 19.♘fd5! ♕g5 20.f4! exf3 21.♕xf3 and White preserves some edge.

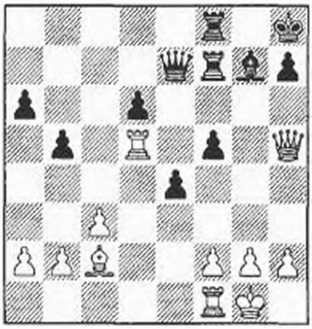
17.♕h5 ♖af7 18.♖ad1

This move can be played in a blitz game in a flash; nevertheless it turned out to be a novelty! It does not have any separate meaning though, because soon the game will transpose to a well familiar position. Svidler tried here the careless and risky 18.g4 three times, but he was not successful at all. White wins material indeed, but his king is weakened and White had problems later, for example: 18...e4 19.♗c2 ♘e5! 20.♘f4 ♗d7 21.♗b3 fxg4 22.♘e6 ♗xe6 23.♗xe6 ♕f6 24.♗xf7+ ♖xf7, Svidler – Kasparov, Internet 1998.

18...♘e7 19.♘xe7+ ♕xe7 20.♗c2 e4

This is already a real novelty. There was a game before with: 20...♔h8 21.♖fe1 ♖f6 22.♘d5 ♗xd5 23.♖xd5 ♖h6 24.♕f3 ♕e6, and the opponents agreed surprisingly to a draw, Delchev – Lalic, Zadar, 1997.

21.♘d5 ♗xd5 22.♖xd5 ♔h8



The dust has settled and it is high time we evaluated the results of the opening. It looks like Black's problems are over: it is a middlegame with opposite-colour bishops and the black bishop has a wonderful square in the centre – e5. Anand's move suddenly puts an end to Black's illusions.

23.f4!

White kills two birds with one stone: he fixes the weakness on f5 and deprives the black bishop from the e5-square.

23...b4

Black loses a pawn after 23...exf3 24.♖xf3, since the pawn on f5 cannot go forward, because of the checkmate on h7.

24.cxb4 ♗xb2

The white pawn on b4 should have been more attractive for Black, so he could have tried 24...♕b7!?.

25.♗b3 ♗a3

Black is trying to capture a potentially dangerous white pawn.

26.♕d1! ♕a7+

Of course not 26...♗xb4? 27.♕d4+.

27.♕d4+ ♕xd4+ 28.♖xd4 ♖e7

Black could have lost a pawn after 28...♖b7 29.♖xd6 ♗xb4 30.♖xa6.

29.♔f2!

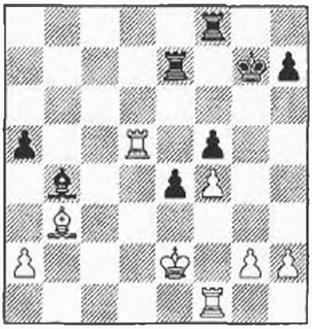
The march of the white king to e2 neutralizes Black's passed pawn.

29...a5

It is time for Black to free his bishop.

30.♖xd6 ♗xb4 31.♖d5 ♔g7 32.♔e2

Black still has a couple of problems to solve...



32...♖f6?!

This evaluation is not so much of the move as of the next series of Black's moves. Peter seeks counterplay, but he is only making matters worse. It is possible that the passive defence of the f5-pawn could be successful, because

Black can always counter White's attempt to organize the pawn-break g2-g4 with h7-h5. Black's best chance for a counterplay was 32...♖c7!?.

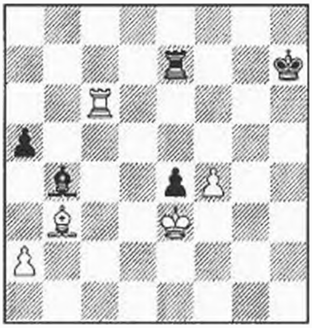
33.♖c1 ♖g6 34.g3 ♖h6 35.h4 ♖g6

White now has a weakness indeed, but only temporary...

36.♖xf5 ♖xg3 37.♖g5+!

I believe that Leko simply underestimated that resource for White, while he was calculating variations.

37...♖xg5 38.hxg5 h6 39.gxh6+ ♔xh6 40.♖c6+ ♔h7 41.♔e3!



Black's e4-pawn is doomed now. The arising endgame is very difficult for Black, particularly from the point of view of practical play. White can try to win it slowly, little by little in a 200 moves game! If White had tried to push his f-pawn forward more quickly, he was risking not managing to capture the half-dead black e4-pawn: 41.f5 ♖e5 42.f6 ♗c5 43.♖c8 ♖f5 44.f7 ♔g7.

41...♖g7!

The young Hungarian grandmaster is a regular defender of difficult positions. He will never surrender just like that. This young man is a very hard nut to crack, indeed!

42.♗e6?!

Vishy begins to act really strangely starting with that move. He played plenty of unnecessary moves and permitted Black to consolidate and defend successfully. It was much stronger to play the simple 42.♔xe4, or the immediate 42.f5!, and the moment the white pawn comes to f5, or f6 – White's winning chances would have been very real.

42...♖g3+ 43.♔xe4 ♖c3 44.♗c4

Naturally White should avoid the exchange of the rooks.

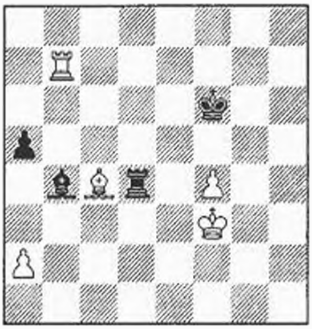
44...♖h3 45.♖a6 ♖h6 46.♗e6?!

The Indian grandmaster was evidently in love with this square and he placed there his bishop every time he could... 46.♖a7+ was more dangerous for Black.

46...♖h4 47.♖a7+ ♔g6 48.♗f7+ ♔f6

The black king now takes part in the defence.

49.♗b3 ♗d6 50.♖f7+ ♔g6 51.♖f5 ♖h1 52.♖d5 ♖e1+ 53.♔f3 ♗b4 54.♗c4 ♔f6 55.♖b5 ♖d1! 56.♖b6+ ♖d6 57.♖b7 ♖d4 ½ – ½



Draw?? It is always enjoyable to play with a draw in your pocket and I do not understand why Anand did not continue the fight with: 58.♖f7+ ♔g6 59.♗e6 followed by f4-f5. Well, Black will probably make a fortress defending the f6-square; nevertheless wait and see and let him do it!

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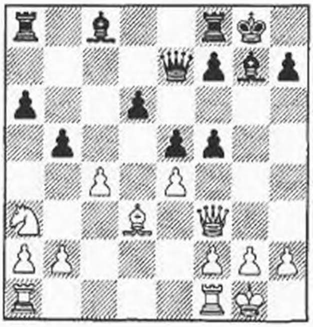
Kramnik – Radjabov

Round 1 31.07

Notes by M. Notkin

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 e5 6.♘db5 d6 7.♗g5 a6 8.♘a3 b5 9.♗xf6 gxf6 10.♘d5 ♗g7 11.♗d3 ♘e7 12.♘xe7 ♕xe7 13.c4 f5 14.0–0 0–0 15.♕f3

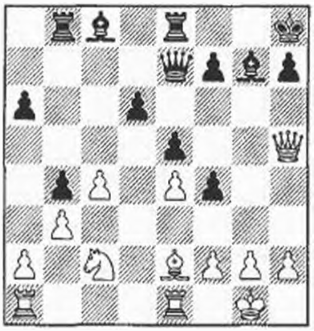


A well-known and thoroughly studied line of the Sveshnikov Variation. Here Radjabov chose a very rare move apparently trying to take his prominent opponent by surprise.

15...d5

The main theoretical line explored inside out is 15...bxc4 16.♘xc4 d5! 17.exd5 e4 18.♕e3 ♗b7 19.d6 ♕f6 20.♗c2. Let's look at the recent games of the young Moscow GM Dmitry Jakovenko: 20...f4 (against Svidler the youth successfully did without f5-f4 – 20...♖ac8 21.b3 ♗d5 22.♖ad1 ♗xc4 23.bxc4 ♖xc4 24.♗b3 ♖c3 25.♕a7 ♖d8 and Black is close to equality Svidler – Jakovenko, Togliatti 2003) 21.♕h3 ♖ac8 22.b3 (the alternative is 22.♗b3) 22...♕g6 (now 22...♗d5?! won't do in view of 23.♖ad1 ♗xc4? 24.♗xe4!) 23.♖ad1 ♖c5 24.d7 ♖h5 25.♕f3!? exf3 26.♗xg6 hxg6 27.d8♕ fxg2! 28.♖fe1 ♖xd8 29.♖xd8+ ♔h7 30.♖e7 ♗d5 and almost 70 moves later a draw was agreed in the ♖+♘ vs ♖ ending, Grischuk – Jakovenko, Moscow 2003.

Kramnik against Shirov (Linares 2000) tested 15...♖e8!? 16.♖fe1 b4 17.♘c2 f4! 18.♗e2 (after 18.♘xb4 Black continues 18...♕g5 19.h3 ♖b8 regaining the b2-pawn with active play or even 18...♖b8 19.♘c6 ♕g5 20.♘xb8 ♗g4 21.♕xg4 ♕xg4 22.♘xa6 f3 23.g3) 18...♖b8 19.b3 ♔h8 20.♕h5



and here Vladimir offered a brilliant pawn sacrifice 20...d5! 21.cxd5 ♖b6. To avoid the kingside offensive Alexey simplified the position by a sacrifice in reply 22.♖ad1 a5 23.d6! and the game ended in a draw soon after. That game obviously influenced Radjabov. Here he endeavours to carry out the same ideas.

16.cxd5 f4

In some games 16...fxe4 17.♗xe4 ♕d6 18.g4 has been played.

17.♖fc1

The open file should be exploited.

17...♔h8 18.♘c2 ♗d7

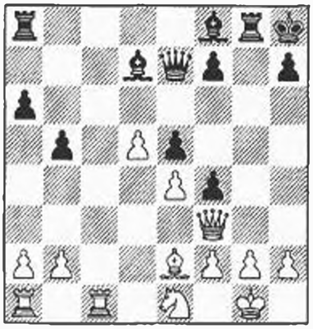
Preventing White from gaining an initiative on the queenside with a2-a4. Nevertheless the problems that White poses in the game turn out to be even more serious. Therefore the immediate 18...♖g8 is worth exploring.

Here Kramnik finds a neat rearrangement of his pieces.

19.♘e1!

Against Shirov the wily Kramnik played 15...♖e8 forcing the white rook to occupy this square!

19...♖g8 20.♗e2 ♗f8



The critical moment of the game. Black's next move seems like it will be ♗g4...

21.♘d3!!

White not only ignores his opponent's idea but makes a move that deprives his own queen of all possible retreats.

21...♖e8

After 21...♗g4 22.♕xg4 ♖xg4 23.♗xg4 Black has no counterplay while the white rooks penetrate freely along the c-file.

22.♖c7

In the event of 22.♘c5 ♗g4 (22...♗c8 also comes into consideration) 23.♕d3 (the ending after 23.♕xg4 ♖xg4 24.♗xg4 ♕xc5!? 25.♖xc5 ♗xc5 26.♖c1, though favourable for White, may cause him some technical difficulties due to the opposite colour bishops) 23...♕g5 24.♗xg4 ♕xg4 White will have to weaken his king's shield by 25.g3.

22...♕d8 23.♖ac1 ♖g6

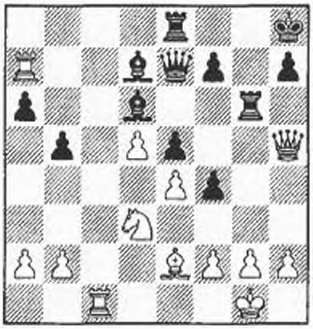
Or 23...♗d6 24.♖a7 ♗g4 25.♕xg4 ♖xg4 26.♗xg4 ♕b6 27.♖d7! with a clear advantage to White.

24.♕h5 ♗d6

The attempt to get counterplay with 24...f5 25.exf5 ♖f6 is met by 26.♗g4 ♗d6 27.♖a7 e4 28.♘c5 and White's threats are by no means less dangerous.

25.♖a7 ♕e7

Relatively better was 25...♖eg8 though White would have retained the advantage by 26.♘xe5! (less convincing is 26.♗f3 ♖g5 27.♕xf7 ♖5g7 28.♖xd7 ♕xd7 29.♕xd7 ♖xd7 30.♖c6 a5 31.h3! albeit this ending is obviously better for White as well) 26...♖xg2+ 27.♔h1 ♗xe5 28.♕xe5+ ♖8g7 29.♕xf4 (29.♗f3?? ♖xh2+ 30.♔xh2 ♕h4#) 29...♗h3 and the idea of ♕g8 creating some threats to the White king is repelled by the precise 30.♕e3 ♕g8 31.f4! ♖xe2 32.♕xh3 ♖xe4 33.♖ac7.



26.h3! f5

26...♖g5? loses to 27.♖xd7; if 26...♖eg8 27.♗g4 ♗xg4 28.♕xg6! ♖xg6 (28...♕xa7 29.♕xd6) 29.♖xe7 ♗xe7 30.hxg4 with an easy win for White in the ending.

27.exf5 ♖f6 28.♘c5!

The most vigorous way of converting the advantage into a win.

28...♖c8

28...♗xc5 29.♖xc5 ♖xf5 (29...♕xc5 30.♖xd7 ♖e7 31.♖d8+ ♔g7 32.♕g5+) 30.♕xf5! ♗xf5 31.♖xe7 ♖xe7 32.d6+−

29.♖xd7 ♖xc5 30.♖xe7 ♖xc1+ 31.♔h2 1–0

Black resigned in view of 31...♗xe7 32.♕e8+ ♗f8 33.d6!.

136 B17

Naiditch – Bologan

Round 1 31.07

Notes by S. Shipov

It is always very difficult for the novices in the super-tournaments. The level is different and the tension is unbearable! You can also qualify Viorel as a novice in a way, despite the fact that he has played plenty of strong tournaments. His experience at that superb level was very scarce, nevertheless he had some and it came handy...

1.e4 c6

This was a kind of a surprise. Viorel evidently worked a lot on this ancient opening especially for the Dortmund tournament. Why not – the Caro-Kann enjoys the reputation to be solid and reliable. It might not be suitable for a Swiss tournament, but it is excellent for a strong round-robin!

2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 dxe4 4.♘xe4 ♘d7 5.♘g5 ♘gf6 6.♗d3 e6 7.♘1f3 ♗d6

Nobody ever touches the h7-pawn here: 7...h6? 8.♘xe6! after the famous game between Kasparov and Deep Blue!

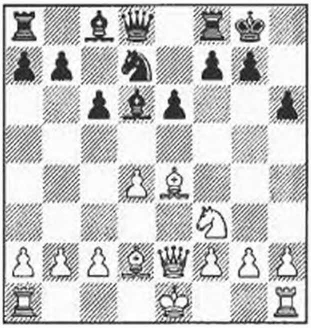
8.♕e2 h6 9.♘e4 ♘xe4 10.♗xe4

As you know after 10.♕xe4 ♘f6 11.♕h4 Anatoly Evgenievich (in his game against Kamsky) found an amazing move here 11...♔e7! threatening g7-g5, and forcing White to sacrifice a pawn – 12.♘e5 ♗xe5 13.dxe5 ♕a5+ etc. Nowadays that line is considered to be rather unclear.

10...0–0

After 10...♘f6 11.♗d3 the game transposes to a position in which White might have captured on e4 with the queen and then retreated to e2. The lesson is – should White capture on e4 with the bishop, Black has an additional possibility to play like in that game.

11.♗d2



This is an interesting idea – to castle long in that position. Generally speaking that is one of the basic tendencies of the development of theory. White is trying to experiment with castling long in every opening, in every variation if possible. He is sometimes ready to try to castle long even risking his life...!

11...e5!

Thanks to the placement of the knight on d7 Black manages to simplify in the centre.

12.dxe5 ♘xe5 13.0–0–0

White's initiative is obviously insufficient to obtain any real advantage.

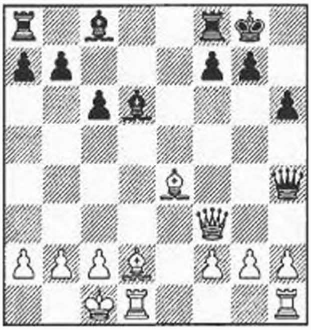
13...♘xf3N

This is a novelty. In the game Vyskocil – Meduna, Pribram 2002, Black equalized after 13...♗g4 14.h3 ♗xf3 15.♗xf3 ♕c7 16.♗c3 ♘xf3 17.♕xf3 ♗e5 18.♗xe5 ♕xe5 19.♖he1 ♕g5+ 20.♕e3 ♕a5 21.a3 ♖ad8 and the opponents agreed to a draw some ten moves later.

14.♕xf3

White had here a fighting and enterprising move – 14.gxf3 opening the file for the rooks.

14...♕h4



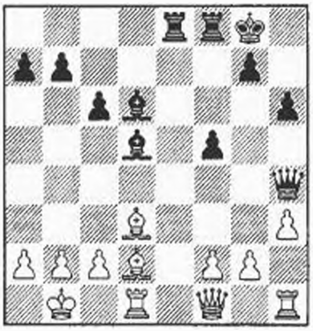
15.h3?!

Stating at that moment Arkady began playing rather passively and his more experienced opponent took advantage of that. It was better for White to play 15.g3 ♕h3 (15...♕g4 16.♗xh6!) 16.♕b3 and the only way for Black to complete his development was to sacrifice the b7-pawn. That was definitely risky and not necessarily correct, though...!

15...♗e6 16.♔b1 f5! 17.♗d3 ♗d5 18.♕e2

White is going back all the time!

18...♖ae8 19.♕f1



Should White place his bishops on the 1st rank and it would be a picturesque position.

19...♗c5 20.f3 b5!

Black has occupied the centre and he starts attacking the enemy king now.

21.♖e1 ♖d8 22.♗c3 a5 23.♗e5 ♗d6

This is a wise decision, because Black wants to exchange White's only active piece.

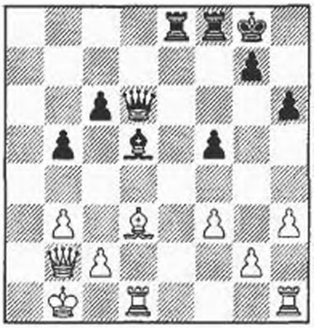
24.♕g1 ♕a4 25.b3 ♕b4 26.♗xd6 ♕xd6 27.♕d4 a4 28.♕b2 ♖de8 29.♖d1?!

Both players seem to be experts in playing with rooks, because no one is ready to exchange rooks at any moment!

29...axb3

I think it was very good for Black to play 29...a3, fixing the weakness of the 1st rank for White.

30.axb3



Black now has a file for a checkmating attack! He should be aware of the possibility for the White's rooks to penetrate on e7, particularly with Black's f-pawn on f5. There are lines in which it is not easy to create any decisive threats with only two rooks and one can only wish that he might have had more...

30...♕b4!

It was important for Black to control the e1-square.

31.♖hg1

White's first attacking move in this game.

31...♖f7!

One of the black rooks is headed for action, while the other one is just supporting...!

32.f4

This move is quite typical for the time-trouble. White starts some active actions with the idea to confuse the opponent in the time-pressure. The other possibility: 32.g4 ♗xf3 33.♖df1 ♗e4 34.gxf5 ♗xd3 35.cxd3 – had its drawbacks too, because White's pawn structure would be in ruins, divided into small islands.

32...♕xf4!

Black plays to contain his opponent's initiative having some extra material and that is the best way to play for a win, particularly when his pieces are placed so well. That is definitely the case here!

33.g4 ♗e4 34.♖de1 ♖d8

The rooks are avoiding each other (for the third time in this game) on the central files.

35.♖gf1 ♕g3 36.♖g1 ♕xh3!

The more you eat, the less it remains...

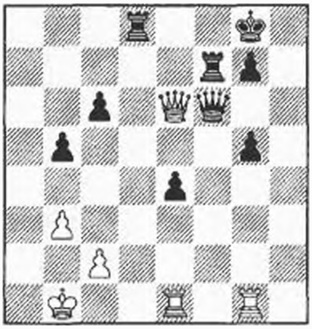
37.♗xe4 fxe4 38.♕e5 ♕f3 39.g5

After 39.♖xe4 Black plays 39...♖d1+ 40.♖xd1 ♕xd1+ 41.♔b2 ♖f1! and wins.

39...hxg5 40.♕e6

40.♖xg5 ♖d1+ 41.♖xd1 ♕xd1+ 42.♔b2 ♕d8!.

40...♕f6!



The time-control was over and Black remained with plenty of extra pawns. White's attack was repelled.

41.♖xe4 ♖a8! 42.♖e5 ♕xe6 43.♖xe6 ♖f6

This is the most reliable line.

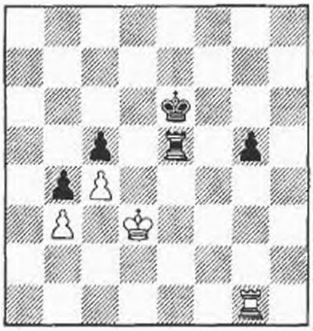
44.♖e5 ♖g6 45.♖exg5 ♖xg5 46.♖xg5

White managed to recapture two of the three missing pawns, but that was still not enough. This rook and pawn endgame is lost for White, because he cannot cope with the passed g-pawn, his king is too far away, and he has no counterplay whatsoever.

46...♖f8 47.♔b2 ♔h7 48.♖h5+ ♔g6 49.♖h3 ♖f5 50.♔c3 c5 51.♔d3 ♖e5!

White's king is cut away from the triumphant march of the passed black pawn. There followed:

52.c4 b4 53.♖h1 ♔f6 54.♖f1+ ♔e6 55.♖g1 g5



The pawn has been defended and it is time to bring the king forward. White might have made a draw without the pawns on the queenside, because then the white king might have attacked the rook from the d4-square. His position is hopeless however with the queenside pawns present on the board!

56.♖f1 ♖f5 57.♖h1 ♔e5 58.♖e1+ ♔f6 59.♖h1 ♖e5 60.♖f1+ ♔g6 61.♖g1 ♔h5 62.♖h1+ ♔g4 63.♖h8 ♔f4 0–1

White resigned. What was that – the beginning of a nightmare, or just an annoying mishap at the start of the tournament, which could be forgotten at the end? Arkady Naiditsch was the only one who could answer that question with the way he played...

137 **B32**

Anand – Radjabov

Round 2 1.08

Notes by N. Vlassov

Teimour beat Kasparov with Black in the second round in Linares and now in round 2 of the Dortmund tournament he beat Anand. This is becoming a tradition or what...?

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 e5 5.♘b5 d6 6.c4

6.♘1c3 is generally more popular.

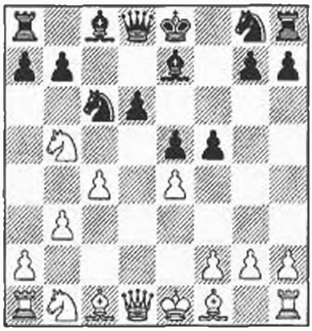
6...♗e7

This is one of the modern lines of the Kalashnikov variation. Black plans to repel the white knight away from the b5-square with a7-a6 and then to exchange the dark squared bishops on g5.

7.b3

White in his stead saves his bishop from the eventual exchange and prepares to attack the d6-pawn from a3.

7...f5



8.exf5

Vishy failed to obtain any advantage after 8.♗a3 ♘f6 9.♘1c3 ♕a5 10.♕d2 0–0 11.♘d5 ♕xd2+ 12.♔xd2 ♖d8 13.♘xe7 ½ Anand – Tregubov, Shenyang 2000.

8...♗xf5 9.♗d3

White is of course ready to trade these particular bishops, because the light squares in the black camp will be defenceless then!

9...e4 10.♗e2

White lost a tempo with his bishop but the black pawn is now on e4 and it will soon need additional protection there.

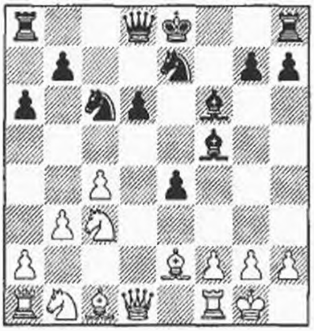
10...a6

It is too risky for Black to play 10...♗f6?! 11.♘xd6+ ♔f8 12.♗a3 ♘ge7 13.♘d2 ♕a5 14.♘xf5 ♕xa3 15.♘g3 ♗xa1 16.♕xa1 ♖d8 17.♘gxe4 ♘d4 18.♗d1 ♘ef5 19.0–0 and it is much easier for White to attack than for Black to defend that position. 19...♕e7 20.c5 h5 21.♕b1 ♖h6 22.♘c4 ♖e6 23.♘ed6 g6 24.♗xh5 ♘xd6 25.cxd6 Volokitin – Poluljahov, Cappelle la Grande 2001.

11.♘5c3 ♗f6

Black is not afraid to lose tempi in order to deploy his pieces harmoniously.

12.0–0 ♘ge7



13.a3

This is an original idea to develop the rook via a2. White should not go after the exchange of the light squared bishops so ardently because he wastes too many tempi and loses control over the light squares at the end: 13.♗g4 ♕d7 14.♗xf5 ♕xf5 15.♗b2 0–0 16.♘d2 d5∓ and Black is much better.

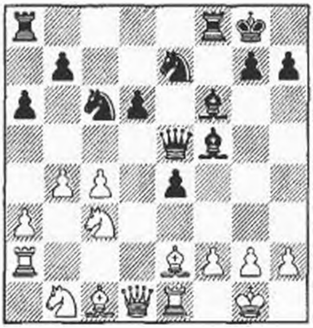
13...0–0

Black could have also played: 13...d5!?. For example after: 14.cxd5 ♘xd5 (14...♘d4!?) 15.♕xd5 ♕xd5 16.♘xd5 ♗xa1 17.♘c7+ ♔f7 18.♘xa8 ♖xa8, White can hardly rely on any advantage in that endgame.

14.♖a2 ♕a5!N

This is a very useful novelty! The black queen goes to e5 and takes personal command over the powerful accumulation of black forces in the centre. Black lost an amusing game after 14...♘e5 15.♗e3 ♕e8 16.♔h1 ♕c6? 17.g4!+–, and now if that bishop retreats the other one gets trapped after g4-g5! Savanovic – Jankovic, Jahorina 2003.

15.b4 ♕e5 16.♖e1



16...b5!?

Black placed his queen in the centre and now must be ready to sacrifice it if necessary. It was very interesting for Black to try: 16...♘d4 17.♗d3 exd3 18.♖xe5 dxe5, or 16...♖ad8 17.♗d3 exd3 18.♖xe5 dxe5 (Black could also play 18...♘xe5 19.♘d2 d5). Radjabov decided to distract White with a pawn sacrifice first.

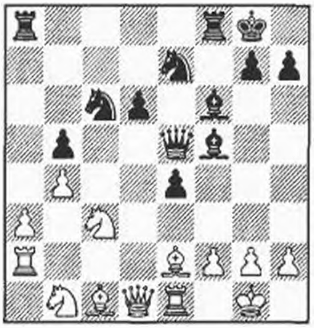
In case of 16...♖ac8 17.♗g4 ♘d4 18.♗xf5 ♕xf5 19.♘xe4 (Black is okay after 19.♖xe4 ♖xc4) 19...♖xc4 20.♘bd2 ♖c7 21.♘xf6+ ♖xf6 22.♘f1 White's position is preferable because of the isolated black d-pawn and his better bishop against an inferior knight in an open position.

16...♔h8?! This was dubious in view of: 17.♗g4! ♗g6 18.♖ae2 d5 19.cxd5 ♖ad8 20.♖d2!± (Radjabov).

17.cxb5

Anand got distracted indeed! The position was too complicated to evaluate it confidently, but still I think that White could have emphasized the drawbacks of Black's last move with the help of 17.♗f3!? For example: 17...♕e6 (17...bxc4 18.♘xe4, and Black is in a serious trouble; 17...♕d4 18.♖d2! ♕xc4 19.♘xe4±; 17...exf3 18.♖xe5 ♘xe5 19.cxb5 axb5 20.♘xb5± ♗xb1 21.♕b3+) 18.cxb5 d5! 19.bxc6 ♕xc6 20.♗h5 (or 20.♘xe4!? dxe4 21.♖c2 ♕b7 22.♗g4) 20...♗xc3 21.♘xc3 ♕xc3 22.♖c2 ♕f6 23.♗b2 ♕d6 24.♕d4 ♖f6 25.♖ec1±.

17...axb5

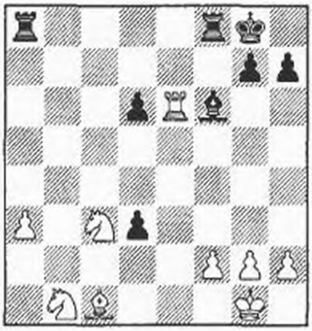


18.♗xb5

After 18.♘xb5 Black plays simply 18...d5 with a powerful pawn centre and not the tactical 18...♘xb4?! 19.axb4 ♖xa2 20.♗c4+ ♔h8 21.♗xa2 ♕xb5 22.♕xd6 and Black's compensation for the pawn is insufficient.

18...♘d4?

This attractive move is refuted tactically. GM Shipov's recommendation 18...♔h8?! is also mistaken because of 19.g4! (remember Savanovic's game!) 19...d5! (19...♗g6 20.f4!+-) 20.gxf5 ♕xf5 21.♘e2 and Black's initiative is not enough to compensate the sacrificed piece. I would venture to recommend for Black 18...♕e6 with a very complicated fight ahead. For example after 19.♗xc6 ♘xc6 20.♕d5 Black can play 20...♘xb4! 21.♕xe6+ ♗xe6 22.♖d2 ♘d3 23.♖xd3 (Black has no problems after 23.♖xe4 ♘c5) 23...exd3 24.♖xe6

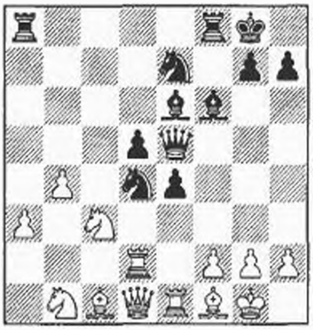


White now has two pieces for a rook but Black's initiative is good enough for at least a draw. He has plenty of attacking possibilities and White must defend with only moves: 24...♗d4 (24...♖ab8!? 25.♖e1! ♖b3 26.♗d2 ♗d4 27.♖f1; 24...♗xc3 25.♘xc3 ♖fc8 26.♗d2 ♖xa3; 24...♖fc8 25.♗d2) 25.♗e3 ♗xc3 26.♘xc3 ♖xa3 27.♗d2 ♖a1+ 28.♖e1 ♖xe1+ 29.♗xe1 ♖b8.

19.♗f1?

White was winning after a combination recommended by Shipov: 19.♗c4+! d5 (19...♔h8 20.f4+−) 20.♘xd5! ♘xd5 21.♗b2! ♖ad8 22.♗xd4 ♕xd4 23.♕xd4 ♗xd4 24.♖d2+− White recaptures his piece and remains with an extra pawn and a winning position.

19...d5 20.♖d2 ♗e6



21.f4!?

This is a very crucial decision for White. Well, you should not expect much from White when almost all his pieces are on the first rank. The following line would have been very risky for both sides: 21.♗b2 ♕f4! 22.♘xe4! dxe4 23.♗xd4 ♗xd4 24.♖xd4 ♕xf2+ 25.♔h1 ♖f6 (But not 25...♗g4?! 26.♗c4+ ♔h8 27.♕d2! e3 28.♕xf2 exf2 29.♖f1±) 26.♖dxe4 ♖af8 27.♗e2 ♗d5 28.♘c3 ♖g6 29.♗f3 ♗xe4 30.♘xe4 ♕h4. The prophylactic move 21.♔h1!? deserved attention too.

21...♕xf4 22.♖f2

White cannot capture the knight because of the spectacular checkmate after 22.♖xd4? ♕f2+!! 23.♔xf2 ♗xd4+ 24.♔g3 (24.♔e2 ♖f2#) 24...♗f2#

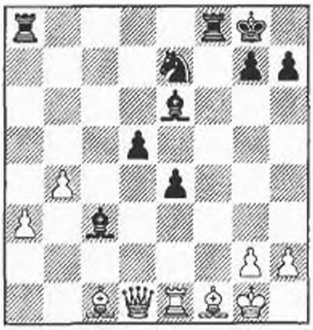
22...♕xf2+!

This courageous move is in fact forced. The retreat of the queen was losing after: 22...♕e5 23.♗f4 ♕f5 24.♗e3! (but not 24.♗d6 ♕xf2+) 24...♕e5 25.♖xf6+−

23.♔xf2 ♘b5!

Black is threatening the already familiar checkmate and so he captures one more piece for the queen.

24.♔g1 ♘xc3 25.♘xc3 ♗xc3



26.♗b5!?

The idea to sacrifice the exchange is correct in principle – the black bishop is very powerful. White had to consider some other possibilities for the sacrifice as well: 26.♖e3 ♖fc8 27.♖xc3 ♖xc3 28.♗b2; or 26.♗d2 ♗d4+ 27.♗e3 ♗xe3+ (27...♗c3 28.♗c5) 28.♖xe3 ♘f5 29.♖e1! (29.♖h3 d4 was in favour of Black according to Radjabov) 29...♖xa3 30.♕c1. The black pawns are stopped for the time being, while White's passed pawn is potentially dangerous.

26...♗xe1 (26...♖fb8 27.♖e3!) **27.♕xe1 ♘f5 28.♗b2?!**

It is obvious that Anand was playing for a win and he probably did not even consider seriously lines like: 28.a4 ♘d4 29.♗b2 ♘xb5 30.axb5 with a probable draw. In fact he was playing with fire – White's position was already really troublesome. He had fewer soldiers on the field and Black's central passed pawns were very impressive indeed.

28...♖ac8 29.♗a4 ♖f7 30.h3

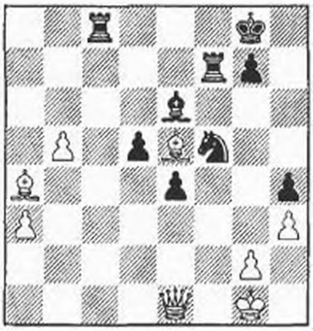
White had better try 30.♗b3 ♖e7 (30...♖cf8 31.h3) 31.g4!? ♘d6 32.♗xd5!? ♗xd5 33.♕d2 ♘c4. This is stronger than Radjabov's recommendation (33...e3 34.♕xd5+ ♘f7 35.♕d4 with a draw) 34.♕xd5+ ♔h8∓.

30...h5!

Black begins to weave a mating net around the white king.

31.b5 h4 32.♗e5

This is White's only defence against ♘g3.



32...d4!?

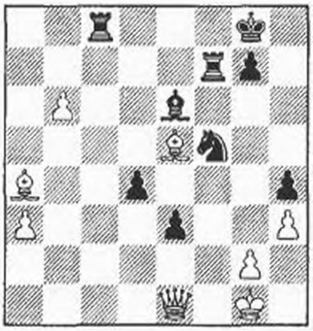
It looked like Teimour would not mind a draw outcome – he was in a time-trouble and his nerves were hardly made of steel indeed! Nevertheless this move led paradoxically to his victory! It was much better for Black to play 32...e3! 33.♗b3 ♖e8!, and only then d5-d4, so that White did not have the possibility 33.♕xe4.

33.b6??

Vishy had to make use of the resource 33.♕xe4. It was considered for a long time after the game that it was a forced draw after 33...♖c1+ 34.♔h2 ♘e3 35.♕xh4. This line can be prolonged however: 35...♖ff1!? (35...♘f1+ is a perpetual and a draw indeed) 36.♕d8+ ♔h7 37.♗xd4 (37.♕h4+?? ♔g6–+) 37...♖h1+ 38.♔g3 ♘f5+ 39.♔f2 ♖hf1+ 40.♔e2 ♖f4! 41.♗xg7! and finally again a draw! I would not be very surprised however if it turns out that I have missed something...

Later, an interesting possibility was found: 33...♘e3! 34.♕b1 (White surprisingly loses after 34.♕xh4 ♖f1+ 35.♔h2 ♘f5! 36.♕g5 ♖cc1–+; 34.♔h2 ♖f2 35.b6 ♖c1!–+) 34...♗a2! (It is not so convincing for Black to play 34...♖f5!? 35.♗d6 ♖f1+ 36.♕xf1 ♘xf1 37.♔xf1 ♖e8! 38.b6 ♗c4+ 39.♔f2 ♖e2+ 40.♔f3 d3 41.♔f4 ♗d5–+; 35.b6! ♖xe5 36.b7 ♖b8 37.♕b6 ♗d5 38.♕d6 ♖xb7 39.♕xe5 ♖b1=; 35...♖cf8! 36.♕e4 ♗d5 37.♗b3! ♗xb3 38.♗xd4 ♘c2 39.♗e5! ♖f1+ 40.♔h2 ♖e1 41.♕d3 ♘e3! 42.♕xb3+ ♔h7= with a draw) 35.♕e1 ♖f1+ 36.♕xf1 ♘xf1 37.♔xf1 ♖e8 and Black should win the game.

33...e3–+



White is now beyond salvation.

34.♔h2

He would have saved the game neither with 34.♗b5 ♖c5 35.♗xd4 ♖xb5 36.♗xe3 ♖e5 37.♕b1 ♖xe3 38.b7 ♖xb7 39.♕xb7 ♖xa3–+, nor with 34.♗xd4 ♘xd4 35.♕xe3 ♖c1+ 36.♔h2 ♖ff1.

34...d3 35.♕b4 e2 36.♗c3 ♖xc3

Black wins more quickly with 36...

♘g3–+, but this was mostly a matter of style, since plenty of moves were winning for Black, though...

37.♕xc3 ♘g3 38.b7 ♖xb7 39.♕a5 ♖b8 0–1

Anand decided to terminate the agony here. His overoptimistic evaluation of the position after the queen sacrifice was the main reason for his sad demise in this game.

138 B33

Bologan – Kramnik

Round 2 1.08

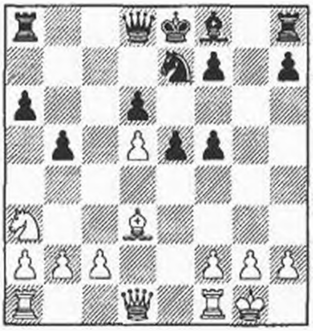
Notes by S. Shipov

It looked like Viorel needed a little bit extra fighting spirit to prevail over one of the favourites right at the start of the tournament. He failed this time, but watch out some other time...

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 e5

Oh, yes of course!

6.♘db5 d6 7.♗g5 a6 8.♘a3 b5 9.♗xf6 gxf6 10.♘d5 f5 11.♗d3 ♗e6 12.0–0 ♗xd5 13.exd5 ♘e7



Black got rid of White's powerful knight on d5 and obtained a couple of mobile pawns in the centre. They are both an asset and a weakness for Black in this position!

14.♖e1

This is definitely not the most popular line. White prepares to retreat with the bishop to f1. The moves 14.c3 and 14.♕h5 are played much more often for White and he usually places the queenrook on e1.

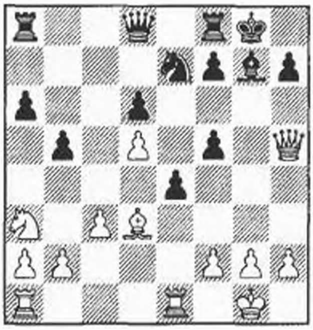
14...♗g7

Black is already threatening to push e5-e4 and capture on b2.

15.c3

White will need to bring the trapped knight into play at some moment. There were some games after 15.♖b1 with the idea to follow with c2-c4, for example: 15...0–0 16.c4 b4 17.♘c2 a5 18.♕h5 e4 19.♗f1 ♕c8 20.g3 ♖e8 21.♘e3 ♗d4 22.b3 ♗xe3 23.fxe3 ♘g6 24.♗h3 and White had some advantage in the game Fercec – Vukic, Rijeka 2003.

15...0–0 16.♕h5 e4



17.♗f1!

This is a novelty and it is quite logical, because the retreat of the bishop to c2 occupies a square that belongs to the knight!

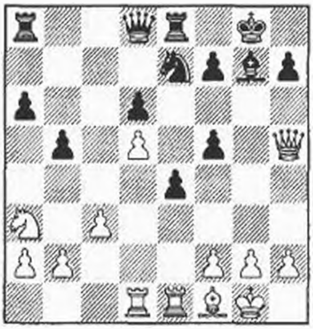
17...♖e8

Black should not be greedy here – 17...b4?! 18.cxb4 ♗xb2 19.♖ab1! ♗xa3

20.♖e3 because White is attacking and the least that he can do is regain his sacrificed material – 20...♘xd5 21.♖h3 ♘f6 22.♕g5+ ♔h8 23.♕xf5! etc.

18.♖ad1

After 18.g3 Black can already play 18...b4!, because the 3rd rank is not available to the white rook to attack anymore.



18...♕c8!

The black queen is redeployed to c5 and it is defending additionally the f5-pawn in the process.

19.♘c2

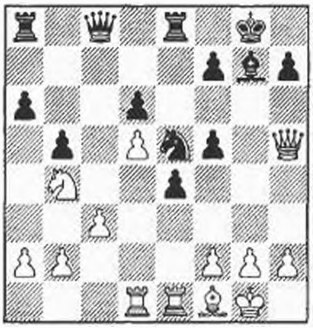
It is obviously premature for White to play 19.g3 ♕c5 20.♗h3, because after the opening of the centre Black gets a powerful initiative after – 20...♘xd5 21.♗xf5 ♘f6 22.♕h3 ♖e5! 23.g4 h5!.

19...♘g6 20.♘b4

White's attempt to put some pressure against the f5-pawn with 20.♘e3 would not have been effective because of 20...♖e5 with the threat to push f5-f4. The move 20.g3 seemed to be very attractive instead, for example: 20...f4 (but not 20...♘e5 21.♘d4!) 21.♘d4 ♖e5 22.♕e2! and the complications in the centre seem to favour White after all, since his pieces are coordinated much better.

20...♘e5

Black defends the c6-square.



21.♘c2

Unfortunately both opponents were mostly interested in their safety at that moment. Viorel might have tried something more aggressive against a less formidable opponent, for example: 21.♖e3! ♘g4 22.♖h3, or 22.♖g3 and White still has considerable winning chances.

21...♘g6!

Black must be able to counter ♘c2-e3 with ♖e8-e5!

22.♘b4 ♘e5 23.h3

This tentative move deprives the black knight of the g4 square, but White deprives himself of the h3-square.

23...♖b8 24.♘c2

White does not have any effective plan to activate his pieces anymore.

24...♘g6 25.♘b4 ♘e5 26.♘c2 ♘g6 27.♘b4 ½ – ½

139 **C88**

Leko – Naiditsch

Round 2 1.08

Notes by N. Vlassov

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗a4

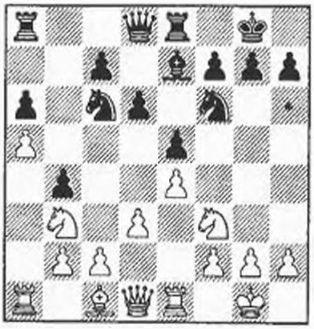
♘f6 5.0–0 ♗e7 6.♖e1 b5 7.♗b3 0–0 8.a4 b4 9.d3 d6 10.a5 ♗e6 11.♘bd2

This is a well-known line of the Ruy Lopez.

11...♗xb3

Grischuk played here 11...♖b8 12.♘c4 ♗g4 13.♗e3 ♘d7 14.h3 ♗xf3 15.♕xf3 ♗g5 16.♗a4 ♗xe3 17.♕xe3 ♘d4 18.c3 bxc3 19.bxc3 ♘b5 20.d4 ♕e7 21.♖ad1 ♖fd8 22.♕g3 ♕e6 23.♘e3 g6 24.♘d5 c6 25.♗xb5 axb5 26.♘b4, but White had a great advantage in the game Kasparov – Grischuk, Moscow 2002.

12.♘xb3 ♖e8



13.♗g5N

This is a novelty, but it is not particularly dangerous because the placement of the bishop is determined too early. White has also tried in practice 13.h3 ♕d7 14.♗g5 h6 15.♗h4 ♘h7 16.♗xe7 ♖xe7 17.d4 exd4 18.♘fxd4 ♘f6 19.f3 ♘xd4 20.♕xd4 ♕b5 21.♕d3 ♕g5 22.♕d2 ♕xd2 23.♘xd2 ♖ae8 24.♘b3 c5 25.♖ed1 ♖e6 26.♖d2 ♔f8 27.♖ad1 ♔e7 Anand – Ivanchuk, Monaco 2001, as well as 13.d4 ♘xd4 14.♘fxd4 exd4 15.♘xd4 ♗f8 16.f3 c5 17.♘f5 ♖e6 18.♗g5 h6 19.♗h4 g6 20.♘e3 ♗g7 21.c3 ♖b8 22.♕d3 ♕c8 23.♘c4 ♕c6 24.♗g3 ♘e8 25.♖ed1 bxc3 26.bxc3 ♖b3 27.♖ac1 ♕a4 28.♖a1 ♕b5 29.♖ac1 ♕a4 30.♖a1 ♕b5 ½ Short – I.Sokolov, Linares 1995.

13...h6 14.♗h4 d5

This is a very good move although not yet forced. Black has an excellent development and tries to fight actively for the centre.

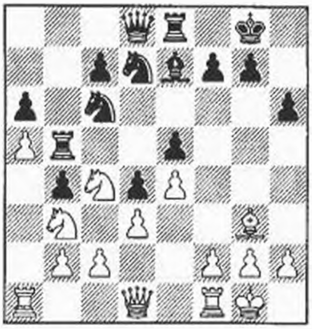
15.♘fd2

Peter seems to have guessed his opponent's next move! White could have provoked interesting complications with 15.♕e2 ♘h5!? 16.♘xe5 ♘f4 17.♕e3 (17.♘xc6 ♘xe2+ 18.♖xe2 ♕d6 19.♘xe7+ ♖xe7 20.♗xe7 ♕xe7 with a double edged position.) 17...♘xg2 18.♔xg2 ♘xe5 19.♗g3 ♘g6 with approximately equal prospects.

15...d4?!

This decision by Black to surrender the important c4-square is not so easy to comprehend. He had better wait for a while with 15...♕d7.

16.♘c4 ♘d7 17.♗g3 ♖b8 18.♖f1 ♖b5



Both sides are playing having the pawn break f2-f4 in mind.

19.♕g4 g5!?

This quite concrete move is very risky too! Black prevents radically f4, but weakens the f5-square irrevocably. Meanwhile the white knight will not manoeuvre there so easily and Black is well prepared for an effective defence.

20.h4

White failed to open the f-file, but he is now trying to open the h-file for an attack. GM Shipov suggested an interesting piece sacrifice here, but it is absolutely not fitting P.Leko's style: 20.f4!? ♘f6 21.♕h3 exf4 22.♗xf4 gxf4 23.♕xh6. White has a couple of pawns for the piece and a powerful pressure along the f-file.

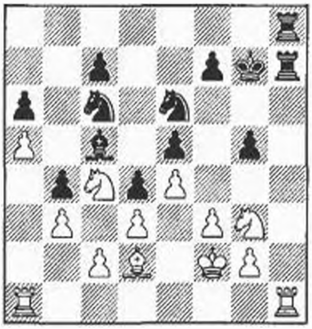
20...♘f6 21.♕f5 ♕d7 22.♕xd7

White has nothing to brag about after 22.hxg5 ♕xf5 23.exf5 hxg5.

22...♘xd7 23.hxg5 hxg5 24.f3

White is planning to occupy the h-file and to bring his knight to f5. He needs to redeploy his bishop first.

24...♘f8 25.♗e1 ♘e6 26.♗d2 ♔g7 27.♘c1 ♖h8 28.b3 ♖bb8 29.♘e2 ♖h7 30.♘g3 ♗c5 31.♔f2 ♖bh8 32.♖h1



White kept on preparing his actions and it turned out now that the h-file was already occupied. His knights on f5 and c4 look really beautiful, but in fact they are harmless.

32...♖xh1

The line 32...♔g6 33.♖xh7 ♖xh7 34.♖h1 ♖xh1 35.♘xh1 ♘ed8 leads to an equal position too.

33.♘xh1 f6 34.g3

White does not achieve much with 34.♘g3 ♔f7 35.♘f5 ♖h2, so Peter is preparing f4 again.

34...♘ed8 35.♔g2 ♘f7 36.f4 gxf4 37.gxf4 ♘d6 38.♘xd6 cxd6 39.♘g3 ♔f7 40.♘f5 ♔e6 41.♘g7+

Black can counter 41.♘h6 with 41...exf4 (41...♖xh6?? 42.f5+−) 42.♗xf4 d5 and he equalizes easily.

41...♔f7

Or 41...♔d7 42.♘f5 ♖h7 43.♘g3 ♔e6=.

42.♘f5 ♖h7 43.♔g3

43.♘g3 exf4 44.♗xf4 ♔e6 45.♘f5 d5 46.♔f3=.

43...♔e6 44.♘h6

White should not go too far while playing for the whole point, because after 44.fxe5 dxe5 45.♔g2 ♖c7! 46.♖h1? ♗f8 47.♖a1 ♘xa5! Black can start thinking about winning himself.

44...exf4+ 45.♗xf4 ½ – ½

The adversaries agreed to a draw here. Leko's attempt to outplay his young opponent without any risk failed. Arkady defended confidently and managed to share the point without too much of an effort.

140 B19

Bologan – Anand

Round 3 2.08

Notes by S. Shipov

The Indian grandmaster was not even a bit like himself in that day's game and he failed to recuperate after his loss in the previous round. His usual reliable playing as well as his *stubbornness in defence and his razor sharp calculations were all gone... Despite all that we have to congratulate Viorel Bologan who demonstrated excellent high-class playing in that game!*

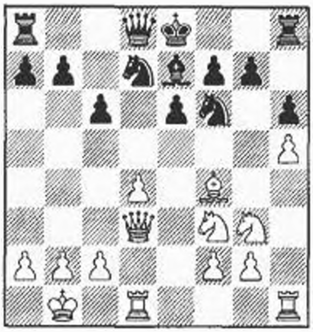
1.e4 c6

In general it is a risky business to choose the Sicilian whenever you are down and out...Vishy decided to play more solidly...

2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 dxe4 4.♘xe4 ♗f5 5.♘g3 ♗g6 6.h4 h6 7.♘f3 ♘d7 8.h5

Black used to play 8.♗d3 outright during the middle of the 20th century, being afraid that the white pawn on h5 might become weak. At the end of the century it became clear that the h5-pawn was very useful for White in his fight to get an advantage. It fixes Black's kingside and the pawns on g7 and h6 may become very vulnerable in an endgame. Presently everybody plays h4-h5 just automatically!

8...♗h7 9.♗d3 ♗xd3 10.♕xd3 ♘gf6 11.♗f4 e6 12.0–0–0 ♗e7 13.♔b1



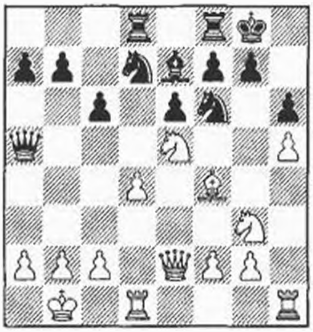
13...♕a5

This is a rare move. Black develops his queen and he is not in a hurry to castle. The main line here is: 13...0–0 14.♘e4, and Black can try to defend the inferior endgame after 14...♘xe4 15.♕xe4 ♘f6 16.♕e2 ♕d5 17.♘e5 ♕e4 18.♕xe4 ♘xe4 19.♖he1 ♘f6 20.g4 Kasparov – Anand, Linares 2003, or enter complications after – 14...♕a5 15.♘xf6+ ♘xf6 16.g4! ♘xg4 17.♖dg1 etc. Ju.Polgar – Anand, Wijk aan Zee 2003. Vishy chose bravely a third possibility, but he would perish at the end...

14.♘e5 ♖d8 15.♕e2N

This novelty is quite logical, since the queen avoids the juxtaposition with the enemy rook. White has played before 15.♘c4 ♕b5 16.♗c7 ♖c8 17.♘d6+ ♗xd6 18.♗xd6 ♕xd3 19.♖xd3 ♘b6, and Black's position is quite solid in this endgame Timman – Larsen, Amsterdam 1980.

15...0–0



16.♘g6!?

This is a nice little trick, but it only leads to an exchange. White does not achieve anything special with it...

16...♖fe8

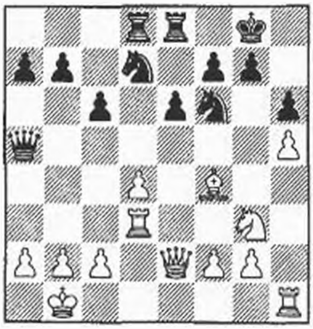
The capture of this "Troyan horse" would have ended in a disaster for Black after: 16...fxg6 17.♕xe6+ ♔h8, and here White's best is 18.hxg6 (the alternative is – 18.♕xe7 ♘d5 19.♗d2!) 18...♘g8 19.♗xh6! gxh6 20.♖xh6+ ♘xh6 21.♕xe7 ♘f7 22.♖h1+ ♔g7 23.♖h7+ ♔xg6 24.♕e4+ ♔f6 25.♘h5+, and

Black must give up his queen to avoid the immediate checkmate.

17.♘xe7+ ♖xe7 18.♖d3!

People usually say in cases like that – a multi-purpose move! The rook might turn out to be very handy along the third rank for operations on both sides of the board.

18...♖ee8



This is the key-moment of the game. White must make up his mind now what plan to choose and how to deploy his pieces. It is evident that he must attack on the kingside advancing the g-pawn, but what to do with the knight on g3 remains unclear.

19.♖hd1!?

This is a seemingly schematic move and I was inclined to put a question mark to it, since the rook had to retreat immediately on the next move... On the other hand if you criticize you must suggest something better instead and that is not easy at all in this case...After 19.♕d1 or 19.♘f1 Black can play energetically 19...c5!, meanwhile when White's rooks are doubled that move is impossible.

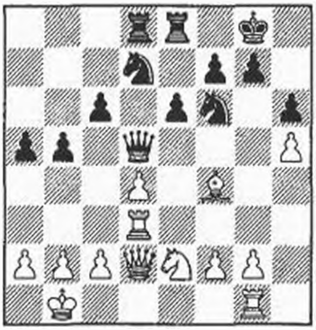
19...♕d5 20.♖g1!

This is ugly but very strong! It seemed to me during the on-line translation that Anand had seized the initiative and he would simply push forward his queenside pawns, while White's pieces were misplaced...

20...b5 21.♕d2! a5

Suddenly it becomes clear that the black queen on d5 is placed beautifully but uselessly! Its vulnerability in the centre of the board makes the preparation of the thematic pawn-breaks in the centre c6-c5 as well as e6-e5 problematic.

22.♘e2!



This is an excellent redeployment of pieces by White! He is ready to play g2-g4-g5 with a checkmating attack, while Black's counterplay is way too late...

22...b4

It is good for Black to capture on h5 neither with the knight 22...♘xh5, because of the tactical strike 23.♗xh6!, nor with the queen 22...♕xh5 due to 23.g4!.

23.g4 ♘e4!

It is not clear what else Black can do in order to defend against the onslaught of the white pawns.

24.♕e3 ♘g5 25.♖c1!?

White changes suddenly his plan with a third strange move of this rook!

He is now ready to open a second front with c2-c4. Viorel played so originally that even a super-experienced chess fighter like Anand got confused after all...

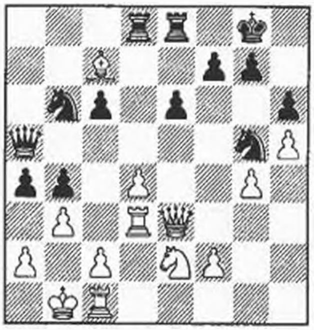
25...♘b6

This is already setting two pieces under an eventual attack by the white bishop. It looked better for Black to play here 25...a4! 26.c4 ♕a5 preserving some counterchances.

26.b3! a4?

That is just a gamble. Vishy ignores White's threat. It was absolutely necessary to retreat away from the damned central square and to try to bring the knight there with 26...♕b5!

27.♗c7 ♕a5



28.f4!

This is just commendable! White is not tempted to win the exchange but goes after something even more substantial – the black king.

28...♘h7 29.g5! hxg5 30.fxg5

White has a powerful attack already and it gradually becomes decisive in the heat of the time-trouble.

30...♖d7 31.♗xb6 ♕xb6 32.♖g1

It was even more resolute for White to play 32.g6! immediately, since the white rook might turn out to be more useful along some other files... In case of 32...♘f6, the move 33.h6 practically settles the issue.

32...axb3 33.cxb3 ♕a5?

Black had to defend with the more stubborn 33...e5 34.g6 ♘f6! with some counterchances.

34.g6 fxg6

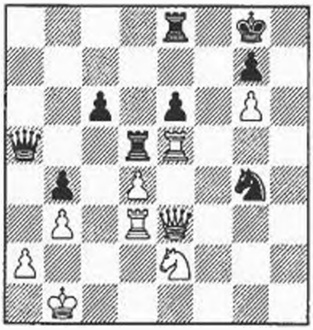
Or 34...♘f6 35.h6!

35.hxg6 ♘f6 36.♖g5! ♖d5 37.♖e5

White is attacking on the kingside but he should not forget the centre. The domination in the centre combined with a successful attack is the trademark of the really strong players...

37...♘g4?

This is Black's ultimate step over the precipice. The attempt to counterattack with 37...♖a8 was harmless for White due to 38.♘c1. Black could have prolonged the fight with 37...♕c7 and it would not be so easy for White to create immediate checkmating threats. His great positional advantage was evident, though...



38.♖xe6!

The routine checkmate along the 8th rank is an indirect protection of the white queen.

38...♖f8 39.♕h3 ♘h6 40.♖xc6 ♖df5 41.d5 1–0

The time-trouble was over and it became a bit dull and ugly for Black to play with two pawns down and so Anand resigned. The qualifier, or as he was announced on one of the channels of the Russian TV – “a not so popular Moldavian grandmaster...”, became the leader of the tournament!

141 **E32**

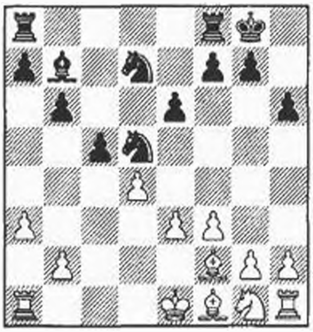
Kramnik – Naiditsch

Round 3 2.08

Notes by N. Vlassov

The world – champion tried to outplay Arkadij (just after Leko did!) without any risk. It almost happened!

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.♕c2 0–0 5.a3 ♗xc3+ 6.♕xc3 b6 7.♗g5 ♗b7 8.f3 h6 9.♗h4 d5 10.e3 ♘bd7 11.cxd5 ♘xd5 12.♗xd8 ♘xc3 13.♗h4 ♘d5 14.♗f2 c5



This popular endgame in the Nimzowitsch Defence is played quite often.

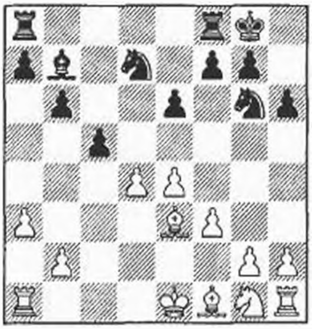
15.e4

White used to play here 15.♗b5, but after 15...♖fd8 16.e4 ♘c7 17.♗xd7 ♖xd7 18.dxc5 f5!, as it was played in the match Kasparov – Kramnik in London, there must be hardly any players willing to play like that with White. 19.cxb6 axb6 20.♘e2 fxe4 21.fxe4 ♗xe4 22.0–0 ♖d2 23.♘c3 ♗b7 24.b4 ♖f8 25.♖a2 ♖xa2 26.♘xa2 ♘d5 27.♗d4 ♖a8 28.♘c3 ♘xc3 29.♗xc3 ♖xa3 30.♗d4 b5 31.♖f4 ♖d3 32.♖g4 g5 33.h4 ♔f7 34.hxg5 hxg5 35.♔f2 ♖d2+ 36.♔e3 ♖xg2 37.♖xg2 ♗xg2 38.♗e5 ½ Kramnik – Kasparov, London (m/8) 2000.

15...♘f4 16.♗e3

The game would have been much livelier after 16.♗b5, for example: 16...♖ad8 17.♘e2 ♘xg2+ 18.♔f1 f5 19.d5 fxe4 exd5 20.exd5 ♗xd5 21.♔xg2 ♘e5 22.♘g1 g5 23.♖e1 ♘g6 24.h4 g4 25.h5 ♘f4+ 26.♔g3 ♘e6 27.♖h4 ♘g5 28.♗e3 ♗xf3 29.♘xf3 ♘xf3 30.♖hh1 ♘xe1 I.Sokolov – C.Hansen, Malmoe 2001.

16...♘g6



17.♖d1N

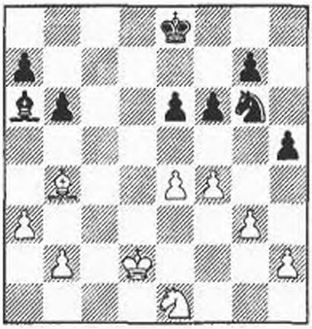
There was a very short draw once after 17.♘e2 ♖ac8 18.♖d1 ♖fd8 ½ Xu Jun – Anand, Hyderabad 2002.

White was definitely better in the end and some other player may have had to fight for the draw a bit longer, though...

17...cxd4 18.♗xd4 ♘de5 19.♘h3 ♖ac8 20.♗c3 ♖fd8 21.♗e2 ♖xd1+ 22.♔xd1 ♘c4

Black is threatening to take on a3 as well as to infiltrate with the knight the e3-square and White is forced to part with his valuable bishop pair.

23.♗xc4 ♖xc4 24.♔e2 f6 25.♖d1 ♖c7 26.g3 ♔f7 27.♘f2 ♘f8 28.♔e3 ♖d7 29.♘d3 ♗a6 30.f4 h5 31.♖d2 ♔e8 32.♗b4 ♘g6 33.♘e1 ♖xd2 34.♔xd2



The pieces keep disappearing from the board and the position remains drawish just like 17 moves ago. Nevertheless Vladimir goes on playing with the hope of inducing some mistake by his less experienced opponent. The method of fighting in similar endgames with bishops of opposite colours is simple: the bishop opposes the enemy knight and the knight takes care of the enemy bishop!

34...h4 35.♘f3 hxg3 36.hxg3 ♔d7

It deserved attention for Black to play 36...♘e7, but Naiditsch did not wish to change the material ratio. Black should not be afraid of 37.♘d4 e5 (He can also play 37...♔d7 38.♗xe7 ♔xe7 39.♘c6+ ♔d6 40.♘xa7 b5!=, as well as 37...♗b7 38.♘xe6 ♗xe4 39.♘xg7+ ♔f7 40.♔e3 f5 41.♗xe7 ♔xg7) 38.fxe5 fxe5 39.♘e6 ♔f7 40.♘d8+ (After 40.♘xg7 ♔xg7 41.♗xe7 the draw outcome becomes evident due to the opposite coloured bishops.) 40...♔e8 41.♗xe7 ♔xe7 42.♘c6+ ♔d6 43.♘xa7 b5! Black draws easily with the threat to trap the knight on a7.

37.♔e3 ♗b7 38.♘d2 a5?!

This move seems to be rather dubious. Its idea is to enable Black to play ♘e7 without letting White exchange it. Black weakens his queenside pawns now and that is much more dangerous! 38...♘e7 was the correct move for Black.

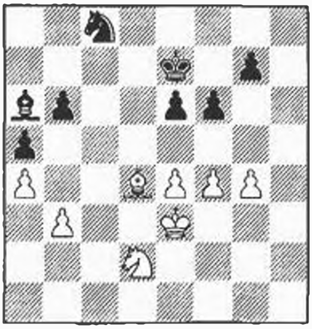
39.♗c3 ♘e7 40.♗d4 ♘c8

Black has some problems after 40...♔c6 41.g4 ♗a6 (41...♔b5) 42.♘f3 a4 43.g5!, and he will be forced to place his knight on g8.

41.g4 ♗a6

It will be bad for Black to place his pawns on light squares: 41...a4, because in case of an exchange of the white bishop for the black knight Black will remain with a bad bishop.

42.b3 ♔e7 43.a4



Black's position seems to be already really difficult. His pawns on both sides need protection and White can slowly build the pressure.

43...b5!

Naiditsch understands that he will be doomed after a passive defence and he resists actively.

44.♗c5+ ♔d7 45.axb5

Otherwise Black will attack the a4-pawn, for example: 45.♗f8 g6 (45...♔e8 46.♗xg7 ♔f7 47.♗h8 bxa4 48.bxa4 ♘b6) 46.♔d4 (46.♘f3 bxa4 47.bxa4 ♘b6 48.♗c5 ♘xa4 49.♗d4 ♔e8 50.♗xf6 ♘b6) 46...bxa4 47.bxa4 ♘b6 and White will hardly win that position.

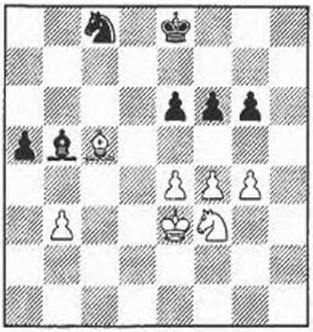
45...♗xb5 46.♗f8 g6 47.♘f3

White is planning to attack the g6-pawn.

47...♔e8

Black could have tried also 47...a4 48.♘d4 (48.bxa4 ♗xa4) 48...♗c6 49.♘xc6 ♔xc6 50.bxa4 ♘b6 51.a5 ♘c4+ 52.♔d4 ♘xa5 53.♗b4 ♘b7 54.♗e7 f5 – with a likely draw.

48.♗c5



48...a4!

Black gives up a pawn in order to reduce the pawns, because he has now only the kingside to worry about.

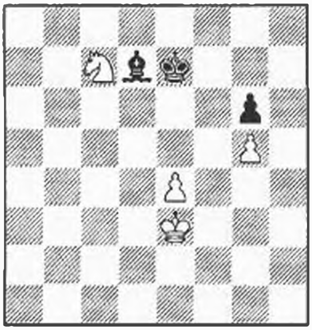
49.♘d4 ♗d7 50.bxa4 ♗xa4 51.♘xe6 ♗d7 52.♘c7+ ♔f7 53.g5

White fixes the enemy pawn on g6 and that is his only winning chance. He achieves nothing with 53.f5 gxf5 54.gxf5 ♘e7.

53...fxg5 54.fxg5 ♘e7

Black could have tried to avoid that exchange: 54...♗h3 55.♔f4 (55.♔d4 ♗d7 56.♔d5 ♗a4 57.e5 ♗b3+ 58.♔c6; 55.♘d5 ♗d7 56.♘f4 ♗g4 57.♔d4 ♗d7 58.e5 ♗g4 59.♔e4 ♗e6 60.♘xe6 ♔xe6 61.♔d4 ♔f5 62.♔d5 ♔xg5 63.♔e4) 55...♗d7 56.♔e5 ♗h3 57.♘d5 ♗e6 58.♘f4 ♗c4 59.♔d4 ♗b3 60.♔c3 ♗a2 61.♔b4 ♗b1 62.e5 ♗a2 63.♔b5 ♘e7 64.♗xe7 ♔xe7 65.♔c5 ♗b1. I do not see how White can improve on these definitely drawish variations.

55.♗xe7 ♔xe7



If we only judge by appearance – that endgame seems to be almost winning for White. Nevertheless no one has found a win for White yet, while Naiditsch demonstrated how to make the draw in the game.

56.♘d5+ ♔d6 57.♔d4 ♗e6 58.♘f4

White fails to occupy the e5-square with his king after 58.♘e3 ♗f7 59.♘c4+ ♔e6 (White wins the king and pawn endgame after 59...♗xc4 60.♔xc4 ♔e5 applying the rule of the triangle: 61.♔d3 ♔e6 62.♔d4 ♔d6 63.e5+ ♔e6 64.♔e4 ♔f7 65.♔d5 ♔e7 66.e6 ♔e8 67.♔e4 ♔f8 68.♔d4 ♔e8 69.♔d5+–) 60.♔c5 ♗e8 61.♔d4 ♗c6.

58...♗f7 59.♘d3

59.e5+ ♔e7 60.♔c5 (60.♔e4 ♔d7 61.e6+ ♗xe6 62.♔e5 ♗f5 63.♔f6 ♔e8

64.♘xg6 ♗e4) 60...♔d7.

59...♔e6 60.♘c5+ ♔d6 61.♘b7+

61.e5+ ♔e7.

61...♔c7! 62.♘c5

It was useless for White to give away his knight with: 62.♔e5 ♔xb7 63.♔f6 ♗e8 64.♔e7 ♗a4 65.♔f7 ♔c6 66.e5 ♗b3–

62...♔d6

62...♔c6.

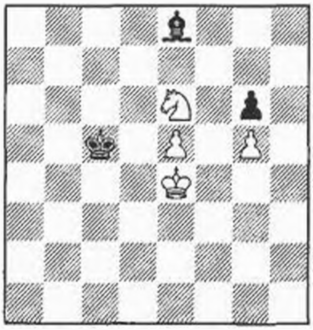
63.♘d3 ♔e6 64.♔c5 ♗e8 65.♔c4

65.♔d4 ♗f7.

65...♗f7 66.♔d4 ♔d6 67.♘f4 ♗e8 68.e5+

After having done everything he could possibly do with a pawn on e4, Vladimir pushed that pawn forward.

68...♔c6 69.♔e4 ♔c5 70.♘e6+



70...♔c4!

This is the only way to save the game, but it is good enough.

71.♘c7

71.♘d8 ♔c5; 71.♔f4 ♗a4 (but not 71...♗d7 72.♘c7!+–) 72.♘f8 ♗c2 73.e6 ♔d5 74.e7 ♗a4 75.♘xg6 ♔e6 76.♔g4 ♗d1+.

71...♗c6+ 72.♔f4 ♔c5! 73.♘a6+ ♔b6

Vladimir played brilliantly and managed to draw away the black king to the queenside, but even that was not enough. 73...♔d5? 74.♘b4+ ♔c5 75.♘xc6 ♔xc6 76.♔e4+–.

74.♘b4

74.e6 ♔xa6 75.♔e5 ♔b6 76.♔d6 ♗e8 77♔e7 ♗c6=.

74...♗e8

74...♗d7 75.♘d5+ ♔c5 76.♘e7 ♗e8 77.♔e3; 74...♗b5 75.e6 ♔c5 76.♔e5 ♔xb4 77.♔f6 ♔c5.

75.♔e4 ♗f7 76.♘d3 ♔c6 77.♘f4 ♔d7 78.♔d4 ♔e7 79.♔c5 ♔d7 80.♔d4 ♔e7 81.♘d5+ ♔e6 82.♔e4 ♔d7 83.♘f4 ♔e7 84.♔d4 ♔d7 85.e6+ ♗xe6 86.♔e5 ♗f5 87.♔f6 ♔e8 88.♘xg6 ♗b1 89.♔g7 ♗c2 ½ – ½

Kramnik tested Arkady thoroughly in all possible positions and finally agreed to a draw. Black's defence was just magnificent with the exception of his move 38!

142 **E12**

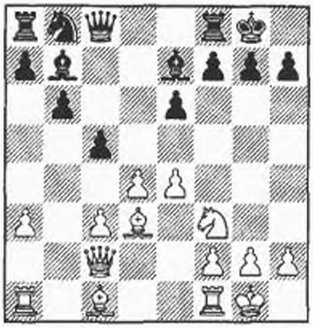
Radjabov – Leko

Round 3 2.08

Notes by N. Vlassov

Young Radjabov is presently easily predictable – in Linares after his win against Kasparov he drew with White against Ponomariov rather quickly. Now in this tournament after his win against Anand he obviously would not mind a draw with Leko. That approach seems to be quite dependable from the practical point of view. He is in fact trading white pieces for calm nerves!

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 b6 4.a3 ♗b7 5.♘c3 d5 6.cxd5 ♘xd5 7.♕c2 ♘xc3 8.bxc3 ♗e7 9.e4 0–0 10.♗d3 c5 11.0–0 ♕c8



12.♕e2

Teimour played against Leko in Linares (Game 94) 12.♕a2 ♖d8 13.♖d1, and had an excellent position.

12...♗a6 13.♖d1 ♗xd3 14.♖xd3 ♘d7 15.e5 cxd4

Anand managed to equalize effortlessly with 15...♕c6 16.♗g5 ♖fe8 17.♗xe7 ♖xe7 18.♘g5 cxd4 19.cxd4 f6 20.exf6 ♘xf6 21.♖e1 h6 22.♘f3 ♖c8 23.♘e5 ♕c2 24.♕f3 ♘d5 25.♕g3 ½ Radjabov – Anand, Linares 2003.

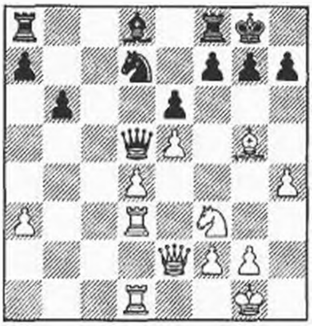
16.cxd4 ♕c4N

This novelty is not changing the evaluation of the position in principle. Akopian played here 16...♖e8 17.♗g5 ♘f8 18.h4 h6 19.♖c1 ♕d8 20.♗xe7 ♕xe7 21.h5 ♖ac8 22.♖cd1 ½ Radjabov – Akopian, France 2003. Generally speaking we can assume that Radjabov's pet-line is not good enough for White for more that a draw at a high-level chess. Teimour in fact likes to play risky with Black! This tactics is quite unusual, but it is not worse than any other – particularly if it suits his character.

17.♗g5 ♗d8

Black can also play here 17...♗xg5 18.♘xg5 ♖ac8.

18.♖ad1 ♕d5 19.h4



19...f6

Black could have postponed that for a while by playing 19...♖c8 or 19...b5, but White could increase the pressure against the black king then with the idea to bring the knight to g4 and the rook to g3 and his threats could suddenly become dangerous.

20.exf6 ♗xf6 21.♖e3

The centre is quite open, so White should forget about a kingside attack for the time being. He concentrates instead against the weakness on e6. The position after 21.♖e1 would have been more or less the same.

21...h6

Black tries to clarify the intentions of White's bishop and facilitates his defence in the process. The weakening of his king is too minor to matter. After 21...♖ae8 Black might subject himself to certain perils as you can see in the following line 22.♗xf6 ♖xf6 23.♖c1 ♖ff8 24.♖c7 and White has the initiative.

22.♗f4 ♖ae8 23.♗g3 ♖f7 24.a4 ♖fe7 25.♕c2

White could have tried to achieve a symbolic edge with 25.♘e5 ♖c8 26.♘g6 ♖ee8 27.h5, but that would have hardly affected the result of the game. Radjabov was in a peaceful disposition that day...

25...♕f5 26.♕b3 ♕d5 27.♕c2 ♕f5 28.♕c6 ♕d5 ½ – ½

The opportune moment to sign the scoresheet just arrived.

143 **B33**

Anand – Kramnik

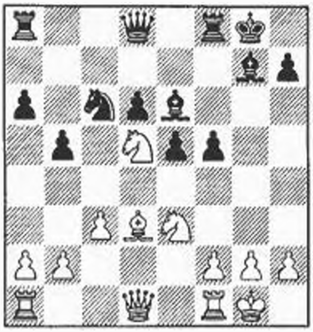
Round 4 3.08

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 e5 6.♘db5 d6 7.♗g5 a6 8.♘a3 b5 9.♗xf6 gxf6 10.♘d5 f5 11.exf5 ♗xf5 12.c3 ♗g7 13.♘c2 0–0

Black played 13...♗e6 in the game Topalov – Grischuk, Wijk aan Zee 2003.

14.♘ce3 ♗e6 15.♗d3 f5 16.0–0

White chooses more often here 16.♕h5.



16...♖a7

This is with the idea to bring this rook to the kingside. Kramnik played five years ago in this position the move 16...e4 and after 17.♘f4 ♗f7 18.♗c2 ♗e5 19.♘fd5 ♕g5 20.f4 exf3 21.♕xf3 ♗h5 22.♕f2 f4 23.h4 ♕d8 (23...♕g3!? Kramnik) 24.♘f5 ♗g6 25.♘d4 ♘xd4 26.cxd4?! (26.♗xg6±) 26...♗xc2 27.dxe5 dxe5 28.♕c5 ♖f7 the adversaries agreed to a draw in the game Anand – Kramnik, Linares 1998. This year Topalov managed to draw with Black after 16...♔h8 17.♕h5 e4 18.♗c2 ♘e7 19.♖ad1 ♖c8 20.f3 ♗f7 21.♕h3 ♘xd5 22.♘xd5 b4 23.fxe4 bxc3 24.bxc3 ♗xd5 25.exd5 ♖xc3 26.♗d3 ♗d4+ 27.♔h1 ♕g5 28.♖xf5 ♖xf5 29.♕xf5 ♕xf5 30.♗xf5 ♗e3 31.g3 ♖c1 Anand – Topalov, Sofia 2004.

17.a4!?

Anand played in his first round game against Leko here in Dortmund the other quite popular move 17.♕h5.

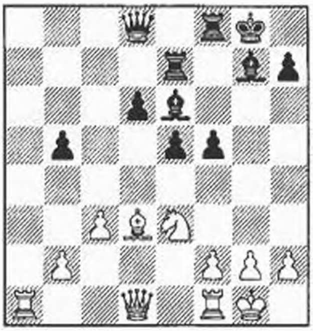
17...♘e7

After the active 17...f4, White has an only move, but quite sufficient at that – 18.♕h5±.

18.♘xe7+ ♖xe7

After 18...♕xe7 19.axb5 axb5 20.♖xa7 ♕xa7 21.♗xb5 ♕c5 22.♗a4± Black's pair of bishops does not compensate the one pawn deficit.

19.axb5 axb5



20.♗c2

Vishy has in mind a queen sacrifice, but it does not lead to an advantage for White. It was possible to simply capture the pawn with 20.♗xb5. The game Svidler – Kramnik, Wijk aan Zee

1999, continued with 20...d5 21.♘c2 (It deserves attention for White to play 21.♖a6!? with the idea to sacrifice the exchange and not the queen, for example: 21...f4 22.♖xe6 ♖xe6 23.♕xd5 ♕xd5 24.♘xd5 and White's chances are slightly superior.) 21...♖b7 22.♗c6 ♖xb2 23.♖a8 ♕d6 24.♖a6 ♕c5 25.♘b4 ♕xc3 26.♗xd5 ♕xb4 27.♗xe6+ and the opponents agreed to a draw.

20...d5 21.♗b3 f4

In case Black chooses to defend his pawn with 21...♖d7, White can also sacrifice the queen after: 22.♖a6 ♖f6 23.♖xe6 ♖xe6 24.♗xd5 ♔h8 25.♗xe6 ♖xd1 26.♖xd1. He then captures the f5-pawn on his next move and Black will have to play without his f4-pawn in comparison to the game.

22.♘xd5 ♖d7 23.♘b4 ♖xd1 24.♗xe6+ ♔h8 25.♖axd1 ½ – ½

144 **B17**

Leko – Bologan

Round 4 3.08

Notes by N. Vlassov

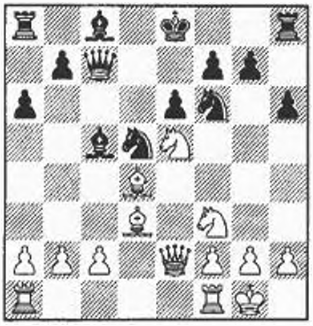
This game deserves quite thorough comments. We should analyse the way GM Bologan reached the level of +3.

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 dxe4 4.♘xe4 ♘d7 5.♗c4 ♘gf6 6.♘g5 e6 7.♕e2 ♘b6 8.♗d3 h6 9.♘5f3 c5 10.♗e3 ♕c7 11.♘e5 a6 12.♘gf3 cxd4 13.♗xd4 ♘bd5 14.0–0 ♗c5?!

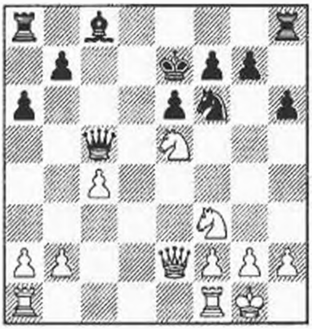
(diagram)

15.♗b5+! ♔f8 16.♗xc5+ ♕xc5 17.♗c4 ♔e7N

There were seldom any players willing to defend Black's position after: 17...g6 18.♗xd5 ♘xd5 19.c4 ♘f6 20.a3 ♗d7 21.♖fd1 ♗e8 22.b4 ♕e7 23.♕b2 ♔g8 24.♖d4 ♔h7 25.♖ad1 ♖f8 26.♖1d3 ♖c8 27.h3 ♖c7 28.♕d2 ♔g7 29.♖d8 ♘g8 30.♖3d6 ♗a4 31.♖xf8 ♕xf8 32.♕d4 Rublevsky – Karpov, Polanica Zdroj 1998. Bologan's novelty did not change the evaluation of this variation as extremely unfavourable for Black. It has been emphasized time and again that one of the main assets of the top-level chess-players is their supreme opening preparation!



18.♗xd5! ♘xd5 19.c4 ♘f6

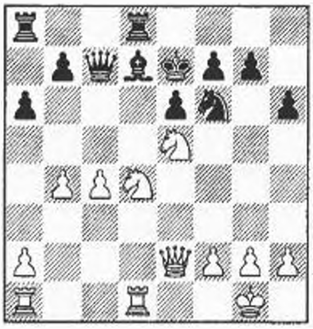


20.♖fd1

It was probably better for White to place there the other rook: 20.♖ad1 ♗d7 21.♘d4 ♖hd8 22.♕e3!± and Black would be faced with serious problems, for example: 22...♔e8 23.♘xe6 ♕xe3 24.♘c7+ ♔e7 25.fxe3 ♖ac8 26.♘d5+ ♘xd5 27.♖xf7+ ♔e6 28.♖xd5 ♗e8 (28...

♖xc4 29.♖dxd7 ♖xd7 30.♘xd7!+–) 29.♖c7! and White remained with two extra pawns.

20...♗d7 21.b4 ♕c7 22.♘d4 ♖hd8



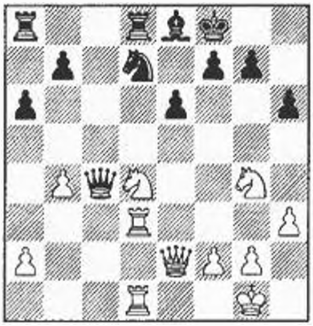
23.♖d3

White had excellent prospects after 23.♘f5+ ♔f8 24.♘d6 ♗e8 (Black's defence was not easier after 24...♗a4 25.c5! ♗xd1 26.♖xd1. Black will have to give back the exchange because of the threat against the f7 square, but White will have a powerful passed pawn on d6 then.) 25.c5±. Black will not be able to put up with the knight on d6 for a long time and that means White will win the exchange after a while.

23...♔f8 24.♖ad1 ♗e8 25.h3 ♘d7 26.♘g4?!

Leko was faced with a stubborn defence and his hand trembled. He had instead 26.♘xd7+!? (recommended by Baburin) 26...♗xd7 27.c5 and also 26.♖f3! ♔g8 (It is even worse for Black to play 26...♘f6? 27.♘g4 ♕b6 28.c5! ♕xb4 29.♕e5+– and White's attack is overwhelming.) 27.♘xf7! ♗xf7 28.♘xe6 ♗xe6 29.♕xe6+ ♔h8 30.♕e7! ♕xc4 31.♖g3 ♖g8 32.♖xd7 and White's position was almost winning.

26...♕xc4!



27.♕d2?

One mistake is usually followed by another... Black's defence was much more difficult after 27.♕e4! h5 (Black loses with 27...♔g8 due to 28.♘xh6+! gxh6 29.♖g3 ♔f8 30.♕f4 f6 31.♖e1!+–) 28.♘e3 ♕c7 29.♕h7 ♘f6 30.♕h8+ ♘g8 31.♘ec2!±.

27...♖ac8 28.♘b3

28.♘xh6 would not have been effective due to 28...♘e5! (Black cannot capture that knight: 28...gxh6 29.♕xh6+ ♔e7 30.♘f5+ exf5 31.♕d6#; it is equally dangerous for Black to play 28...♘f6 29.♕g5 ♖d5 30.♘df5 ♖xf5 31.♘xf5 exf5 32.♖g3 with an attack for White.) 29.♘xe6+ ♕xe6 30.♖xd8 ♖xd8 31.♕xd8 gxh6 with an approximately equal position.

28...♕c7 29.♖c1

29.♖d6!? (Baburin).

29...♕b8 30.♖xc8 ♕xc8 31.b5 ♕c4

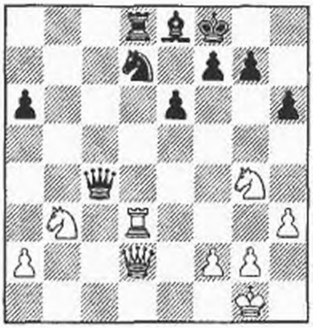
But not 31...axb5? because of 32.♘f6!! ♘xf6 (32...gxf6? 33.♕b4+ checkmates; 32...g5 33.h4! with a victorious attack for White.) 33.♖xd8±.

32.bxa6 bxa6

(diagram)

33.♖d6?

White's position is still very strong despite the one pawn deficit. For example after 33.♘e5 he could win the

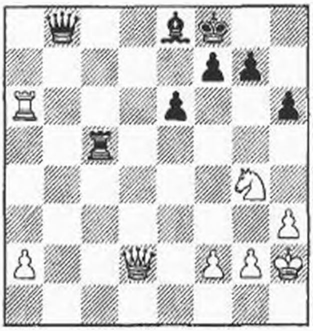


exchange: 33...♕c7 (33...♕b5 34.♕a5! ♕xa5 35.♘xa5± g5 36.♘b7 ♘xe5 37.♖xd8 ♔e7) 34.♕b4+ ♔g8 35.♕e7 ♕xe5 36.♕xd8 ♕e1+ 37.♔h2 ♘f6±. I am not sure that would be sufficient to win the game, but White could have at least tried...

33...♕b5 34.♘d4 ♕b1+ 35.♔h2 ♖c8 36.♘b3 ♘c5 37.♘xc5 ♖xc5 38.♖xa6

After 38.♖xe6 ♕b8 39.♕d6+ ♕xd6+ 40.♖xd6 ♖a5! White might have problems defending his a2-pawn.

38...♕b8+



Now Black was already a little better. Leko makes some more mistakes in the time-trouble:

39.♔g1?

39.f4 was more to the point.

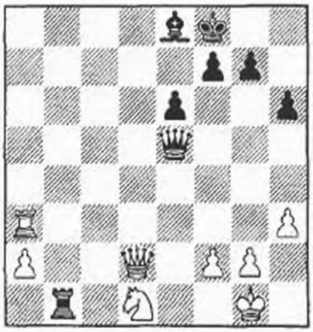
39...♖b5 40.♘e3?

Another mistake! After 40.♕d6+ ♕xd6 41.♖xd6 ♖b1+ 42.♔h2 ♖b2 43.♔g3 ♖xa2+ White emains a pawn down but he should not necessarily lose the game.

40...♖b1+ 41.♘d1

Or 41.♘f1 ♗b5–+.

41...♕e5! 42.♖a3



42...♕g5!–+

Black wins a piece now!

43.♖c3

43.♕d3 ♕c1.

43...♗a4 44.♔h2 ♕f4+ 45.g3 ♖xd1 46.♕d8+ ♖xd8 0–1

So instead of beating Bologan and joining the leaders, Leko lost that game and dropped to the lower half of the tournament table. Bologan was as lucky as a real tournament winner. I do not think that he entered that extremely difficult position after the opening deliberately – he obviously went wrong somewhere. Nevertheless his stubborn defence triumphed in the end deservedly!

145 **B45**

Naiditsch – Radjabov

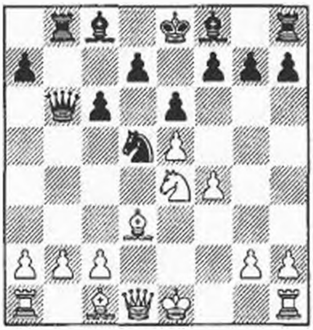
Round 4 3.08

Notes by N. Vlassov

Radjabov missed the opportunity to

continue his series of wins.

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 ♘c6 6.♘xc6 bxc6 7.e5 ♘d5 8.♘e4 ♕c7 9.f4 ♖b8 10.♗d3 ♕b6



11.a3N

Naiditsch was probably afraid of some improvement by Teimour so he produced a novelty himself. Adams crushed Radjabov very impressively after 11.♕e2 ♗e7 12.c4 ♗b4+ 13.♔f1 f5 14.exf6 ♘xf6 15.♘xf6+ gxf6 16.♗e3 ♕a5 17.♔f2 ♗e7 18.c5 d5 19.cxd6 ♗xd6 20.♖hd1 ♔e7 21.♔g1 ♗c5 22.♗xc5+ ♕xc5+ 23.♔h1 ♕b4 24.♕e3 ♕a5 25.b3 ♗d7 26.♗c4 ♖bd8 27.♖e1 ♕b6 28.♕g3 ♖dg8 29.♕h3 1–0 Adams – Radjabov, France 2003.

11...♗e7

According to Golod, Black could have tried here 11...♗a6!? 12.♗xa6 ♕xa6.

12.♕e2

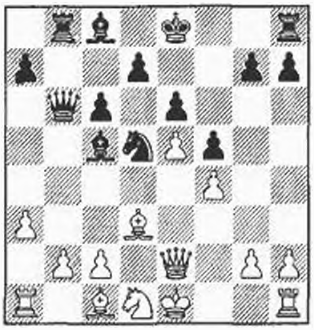
12.c4 is a bit premature in view of: 12...f5!? (But not 12...♘e3 13.♕e2 ♘f5 14.b4 c5 15.b5±.) 13.♘g3 (13.cxd5? fxe4 14.♗xe4 cxd5 15.♕h5+ ♔d8+) 13...♘e3 14.♕f3 ♘g4 (14...♗c5? 15.b4! ♗d4 16.♗xe3 ♗xe3 17.c5+–) 15.h3 ♘h6± (Golod).

12...f5! 13.♘f2?!

It is more natural for White to play 13.exf6 ♘xf6 14.♗e3 ♕xb2 15.0–0. He has a lead in development as a compensation for the pawn and his king is safe, while its black counterpart is in dire straits; 13.♘d6+ ♗xd6 14.exd6 0–0 is not dangerous for Black at all.

13...♗c5! 14.♘d1

After 14.c4? ♗a6 15.cxd5 ♗xf2+ 16.♕xf2 ♗xd3 Black has no problems at all.



14...d6!?

Black's position was okay after 14...a5 too.

15.c4 dxe5!

This brave piece sacrifice is absolutely justified.

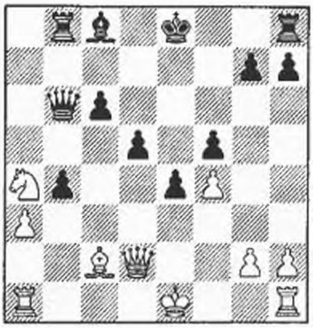
16.cxd5 e4 17.♗c2 exd5

Teimour has once again, just like against Anand, terrific central passed pawns. This time he is a piece down, though...It deserved attention to capture with the other pawn with a powerful pawn square in the centre – 17...cxd5.

18.b4 ♗d4

Golod's recommendation here 18...♗e7?! (with the idea to avoid the exchange of the bishop) does not work because of 19.♗b2 d4 (19...0–0 20.♕f2 c5 21.♗e5±) 20.♕c4! ♗f6 21.♗a4 and White has a great advantage.

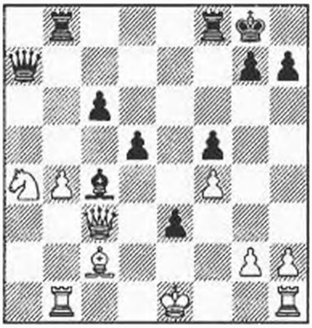
19.♗b2 a5 20.♕d2 ♗xb2 21.♘xb2 axb4 22.♘a4



22...e3! 23.♕d3 ♕a7 24.♖b1 0–0

Black has here two other possibilities analysed by Ftacnik: 24...bxa3 25.♖xb8 ♕xb8 26.♕xe3+ ♔f7 27.0–0 ♖e8 with a quite acceptable position for Black, for example he can counter 28.♕d4 with 28...a2! (But not 28...♖e2 due to 29.♗d3±.) 29.♖a1 ♖e2 30.♗d3 ♖d2 31.♕e3 ♕b4; the other line is a bit worse for Black but still acceptable 24...b3 25.♖xb3 ♖xb3 26.♗xb3 0–0 27.♕c3!, and White controls the c5-square. I have the feeling that Radjabov wanted more from that position...

25.axb4 ♗a6 26.♕c3 ♗c4



White cannot castle and Black is therefore better. At that moment it looked like Radjabov might become the hero at the start of the tournament together with Bologan.

27.♘c5 ♖b5?!

I do not think that Black had to go to that extent in order to capture that knight. It is not so dangerous and he had to play instead: 27...♕e7 or 27...♖a8.

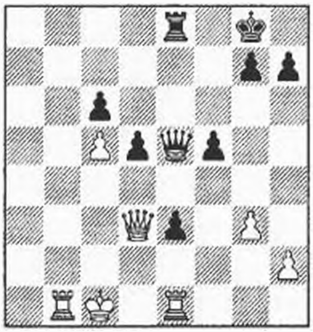
28.♗d3

It was too risky for White to capture the pawn: 28.♕xe3 ♕b8! It was best for him to play 28.♘e6 (Ftacnik) 28...♖e8 29.♘d4 and White has the advantage.

28...♖xc5?!

Ftacnik recommended here 28...♕a2, but White could counter that with the simple 29.0–0 with an overwhelming advantage: 29...♕d2 30.♕xd2 exd2 31.♖fd1 ♖xc5 32.bxc5 ♗xd3 33.♖b7.

29.bxc5 ♗xd3 30.♕xd3 ♕a5+ 31.♔d1 ♕a4+ 32.♔c1 ♖e8 33.♖e1 ♕xf4 34.g3 ♕e5



White managed to consolidate and most importantly introduced his extra rook on h1 into the battle.

35.♖b2 g5?!

Black gambles everything on winning the game and that backfires. His king now has no reliable shelter. After the correct move 35...d4 Black had good chances for a draw.

36.♔b1 d4 37.♖b7 ♔h8 38.g4!

It becomes clear now that White is playing for a win.

38...♖b8 39.♖xb8+ ♕xb8+ 40.♔c2 ♕b4 41.♖b1 ♕xc5+ 42.♔d1 ♕d5 43.♕xf5

White's king avoids the perpetual easily and his extra rook is soon going to help him checkmate his opponent.

43...♕h1+ 44.♔e2 ♕xh2+ 45.♔d3 ♕d2+ 46.♔e4

46.♔c4 ♕c3#.

46...♕c2+ 47.♔xd4 ♕d2+ 48.♔e4 1–0

Could it be possible that here, just like in Linares (where he beat Kasparov with Black), his win against Anand might remain his only success in the tournament?

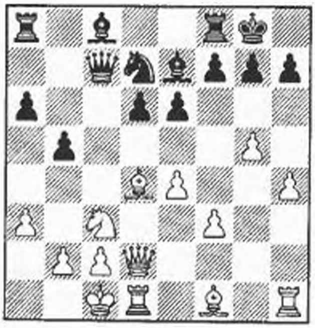
146 **B80**

Kramnik – Leko

Round 5 4.08

Notes by N. Vlassov

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 a6 6.♗e3 e6 7.f3 ♗e7 8.♕d2 ♘c6 9.0–0–0 0–0 10.g4 ♘xd4 11.♗xd4 b5 12.g5 ♘d7 13.h4 ♕c7 14.a3



This is the same prophylactic move that was played in the game between Naiditsch and Anand (these two games were played simultaneously!) and it is much more justified in this position.

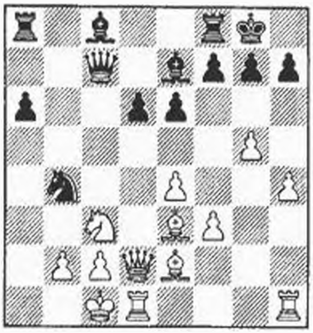
14...♘e5 15.♗e2

White could try here 15.f4 ♘f3 (or 15...♘c4 16.♗xc4 ♕xc4 17.h5 b4 18.axb4 ♕xb4 with a double edged position) 16.♕f2 ♘xd4 17.♕xd4 and after 17...♕c5 18.♕xc5 dxc5 19.♗g2 (this endgame is rather dangerous for Black – he cannot neutralize White's pressure along the d-file easily), as well as 15.♕f2 ♘c4 16.f4. Kramnik pondered over the correct decision for a long time.

15...♘c6!?

The knight suddenly went to c6 instead of to c4 – Leko decided quite correctly that the bishop on d4 was much more dangerous than that one on e2 and he made up his mind to neutralize it first!

16.♗e3 b4 17.axb4 ♘xb4



Black now has open files for an attack against the white king, while White is already a bit too late. Leko's manoeuvre with the knight emphasizing the drawbacks of the move a3 looked impressive indeed.

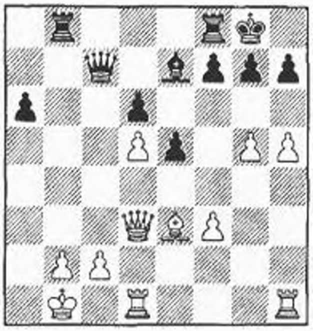
18.h5 ♖b8 19.♔b1 e5!?

This is another important decision – Black develops his bishop to an active position. White now can facilitate his defence with some exchanges.

20.♘d5!

This move seems to be active while in fact it is purely defensive – White exchanges one of the attacking pieces of his opponent. He cannot afford anything really aggressive at the moment – after 20.f4 exf4 21.♗xf4 ♗e6 22.♗xd6 ♗xd6 23.♕xd6 ♕a5 Black has a dangerous attack for the sacrificed pawn.

20...♘xd5 21.exd5 ♗f5 22.♗d3 ♗xd3 23.♕xd3



It becomes really evident after the exchanges that Black is really attacking. He has a powerful pressure along the b-file and he can double and even triple his heavy pieces along it. White must defend very carefully.

23...♖b4 24.♖hg1

This is to avoid the overburdening of the bishop on c1 with the defence of the g5-pawn.

24...♖fb8 25.♗c1 ♕b7 26.♕a3 ♖b5!

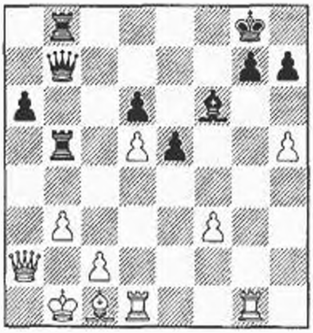
Black now has a new object to attack – the d5-pawn.

27.♕a2 f5!?

Leko intends to bring his bishop into the attack too, and he is not afraid to weaken his king a bit. He could have tried the move 27...♗d8, planning to activate the bishop via a5-c3 or b6-d4.

28.gxf6 ♗xf6 29.b3!?

This is a very good decision in a mutual time-trouble. If Black captures on d5 the white king will be safe and its black counterpart might be endangered.



29...♖xd5!

This resolute move required bravery and very precise calculations.

30.h6!?

White could have tried 30.b4 ♕xb4+ 31.♗b2 (31.♔a1?? e4–+) 31...♕xb2+ 32.♕xb2 ♖xb2+ 33.♔xb2 e4+ 34.c3 ♖b5+ 35.♔c2 exf3 36.♖gf1. Black would have two pawns for the exchange, but White would still have good drawing chances.

30...g6 31.♕a4

31.b4 ♕xb4+ 32.♗b2 ♕xb2+ 33.♕xb2 ♖xb2+ 34.♔xb2 e4+ 35.c3 ♖xd1 36.♖xd1 exf3 37.♖f1 g5 38.♖xf3 ♔f7. White would have probably lost that position; since the h6-pawn would be weak and Black's passed g-pawn would be a real threat.

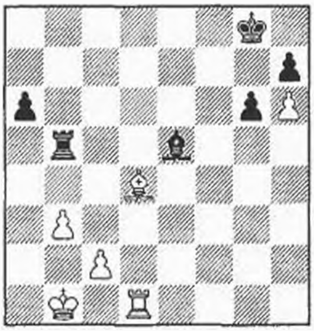
31...♖xd1 32.♖xd1 d5 33.♗b2

White's king is completely safe now and that is only at the price of a pawn. That circumstance could be crucially important in the time-trouble.

33...d4 34.f4?

This mistake enabled Leko to exchange queens and he was not risking losing anymore. It was better for White to play 34.♕c4+ ♕f7 35.♕xa6=.

34...♕b5! 35.♕xb5 ♜xb5 36.fxe5 ♗xe5 37.♗xd4



White must defend a difficult endgame now.

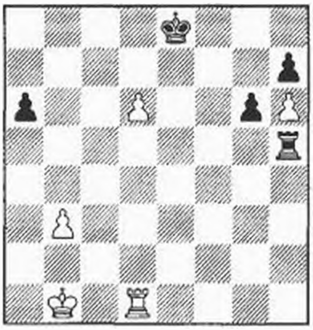
37...♜d5 38.c3 ♗xd4 39.cxd4

The king and pawn endgame seems to be lost for White: 39.♖xd4 ♜xd4 40.cxd4 g5 41.♔c2 ♔f7 42.♔d3 ♔e6 43.♔e4 a5! 44.d5+ ♔d6 45.♔f5 ♔xd5 46.♔xg5 ♔e5! 47.♔g4 ♔f6 –+. 39.♔c2!?

39...♖h5

After 39...g5 40.♔c2 ♔f7 41.♔d3 ♖d6 42.♔e4! ♖xh6 43.♔f5 White should be able to make a draw.

40.d5 ♔f7 41.d6 ♔e8



42.♜e1+!

This is the only plan for White to fight for the draw.

42...♔d8 43.♜e7 ♖xh6 44.♖g7

That was the last critical moment of the game.

44...g5?!

White's task would have been much harder after: 44...♖h5 45.♔c2 ♖d5 46.♖xh7 ♖xd6 47.♔c3 ♔e8 48.♔c4 ♔f8. Still White should have been able to save the game after a precise defence.

45.♖xg5 ♖g6 46.♖a5 ♖xd6 47.♔c2 ♔e8 48.b4 ♖b6

48...♔f7 49.b5 axb5 50.♖xb5 ♔g6 51.♖b3 h5 52.♖d3 leads to a draw because Black would have only his rook pawn left.

49.♔d3 ♔f7 50.♔e3 ♔g6 51.♔f3 h5 52.♔g3 ½ – ½

147 B86

Naiditsch – Anand

Round 5 4.08

Notes by N. Vlassov

This was definitely the worst game of Naiditsch in the tournament. He was too timid and he played without any plan and all that combined with his blunders enabled Anand to crush him quickly and easily.

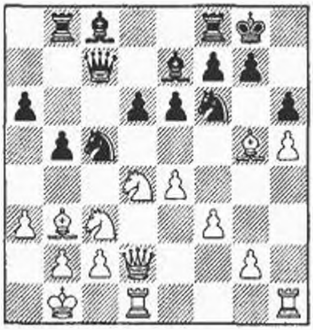
1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 a6 6.♗c4 e6 7.♗b3 ♘bd7 8.♗g5 ♕a5 9.♕d2 ♗e7 10.f3 ♘c5 11.0–0–0 ♕c7 12.♔b1 0–0 13.h4 b5

Black used to play... 13...♗b7!? in that position before! The point is that Black's queen wasted a move to go to c7 in our game, while normally it did that at once and it was Black to move in that position. We can say that the opening is developing in favour of White; however he had to use the extra tempo trying to weaken the enemy king instead of his own...

14.a3?!

14.g4 looks better by far.

14...♖b8 15.h5 h6



16.♗e3?

White would not have any attack after 16.♗xh6 gxh6 17.♕xh6 ♘h7, so he had to retreat his bishop keeping the knight on f6 under surveillance with 16.♗h4, and the position would have been double-edged.

16...e5!

I believe that Naiditsch simply overlooked that strong and quite concrete move. White players do not play like that voluntarily...

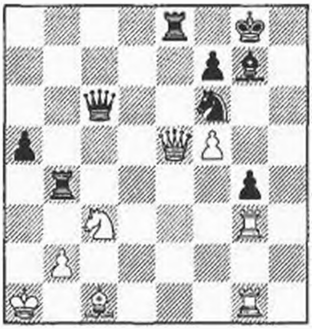
17.♘f5 ♗xf5 18.exf5 ♘xb3 19.cxb3 b4!

White's position is in ruins and Anand did not need to waste a lot of effort to press his advantage home.

20.axb4 ♖xb4 21.♕c2 ♕b7 22.g4 ♖xb3 23.g5 ♖b8 24.♗c1 hxg5 25.h6 ♕xf3 26.♔a1 ♗f8 27.hxg7 ♗xg7 28.♖hg1 g4 29.♖xd6 ♖3b6

Black was winning immediately with 29...e4 and his dark squared bishop would join in the fun, but Vishi suddenly took pity on the humble a6-pawn...

30.♖d3 ♕c6 31.♖dg3 ♖b4 32.♕e2 a5 33.♕xe5 ♖e8 0–1



White's queen suddenly got trapped in the middle of the board.

148 **D37**

Radjabov – Bologan

Round 5 4.08

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 d5 4.♘c3 ♗e7 5.♗f4 0–0 6.e3 ♘bd7

Black's main defensive line here is 6...c5.

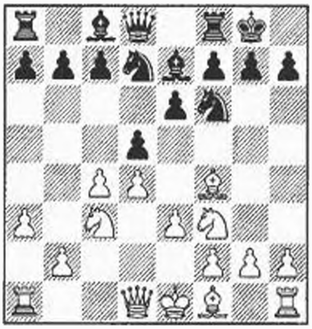
7.a3

In case of 7.♕c2, the move 7...c5 is even stronger, because Black can counter 8.cxd5 with 8...cxd4!.

If 7.♖c1, then Black can resolutely play 7...c5 and after 8.cxd5 (8.dxc5 ♘xc5 9.a3 dxc4 10.♗xc4 ♕xd1+ 11.♔xd1 ♗d7 12.♘e5 ♖fd8 13.♘xd7 ♘cxd7 14.♔e2 ♘h5= Ruck – L.Portisch, Heviz 2003) 8...♘xd5 9.♘xd5 exd5 10.dxc5 ♘xc5 (after 10...♕a5+ 11.♕d2 ♕xa2 12.♗d6 ♗xd6 13.cxd6 ♘f6∞ Black managed gradually to equalize in the game Yermolinsky – Goldin, Cali 2001) 11.a3 (this is an obligatory move for White) 11...♗g4 12.♗e2 ♘e6 13.♗e5

♗f6 14.♗xf6 ♕xf6 15.♕d2 ♖ad8 16.♕c3 d4! 17.♘xd4 ♖xd4 18.f3 in the game Miles – Sanguinetti, Sao Paulo 1977, after 18...♗h3! 19.exd4 ♗xg2 20.♖g1 ♘f4=∞ he could have obtained an excellent compensation for the sacrificed exchange.

White's alternative to the game is the move 7.c5!? and Black has the choice between 7...♘h5 8.♗d3 ♘xf4 9.exf4 b6∞ and 7...c6, followed by 8...b6.



7...dxc4!?

This is an interesting idea. Most of the games in this line usually go into an endgame with an isolated pawn for Black. After 7...c5 8.cxd5 ♘xd5 9.♘xd5 exd5 10.dxc5 ♘xc5 11.♗e2 (11.♗e5 ♗f6 12.♗xf6 ♕xf6 13.♕d4 ♕xd4 14.♘xd4 ♗d7 15.f3±) 11...♗g4 12.♗e5 ♗f6 13.♗xf6 ♕xf6 14.♕d4 ♕xd4 15.♘xd4 ♗xe2 16.♔xe2± White's position is slightly better.

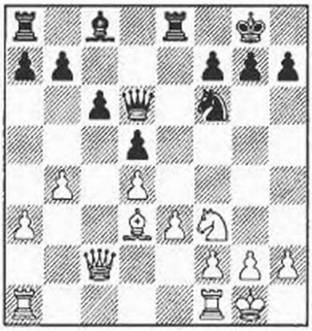
8.♗xc4 ♘b6

Black has also played here 8...a6, and White should probably follow that with 9.0–0 (9.♕c2 c5 10.dxc5 ♗xc5 11.b4 ♗e7 12.0–0 b5 13.♗d3 ♗b7 14.e4 ♖c8 15.♖ac1 ♘b6= Loebler – Singer, Austria 1995) 9...b5 10.♗a2 c5 11.d5± with some edge for him.

9.♗d3 ♘bd5 10.♘xd5

Black's idea is justified perfectly after the retreat of the white bishop to g3 or e5. Black exchanges then the knights on c3 and gets a very comfortable game. For example after: 10.♗g3 ♘xc3 11.bxc3 b6 12.e4 ♗b7 13.♕c2 ♘h5 14.0–0 c5= as it was played in the game Schandorff – Vaganian, Bremen 2002, or 10.♗e5 ♘xc3 11.bxc3 c5 12.0–0 b6 13.♕b1 ♔h8 14.a4 ♗b7 15.♗xf6 ♗xf6 16.♗e4 ♕e7 17.♗xb7 ♕xb7= as in the game Savchenko – Prusikin, Griesheim 2004.

10...exd5 11.♕c2 ♗d6 12.♗xd6 ♕xd6 13.b4 ♖e8 14.0–0 c6=



15.b5

White could have preserved some more tension with the move 15.♖fc1!?, which would have probably prolonged the game with a few moves, but it would not have affected the evaluation of the position as completely equal.

15...cxb5 16.♗xb5 ♗d7 17.♗xd7 ♕xd7 18.♘e5 ♕e6 19.♕b2 ♖e7 20.a4
½ – ½

149 **C89**

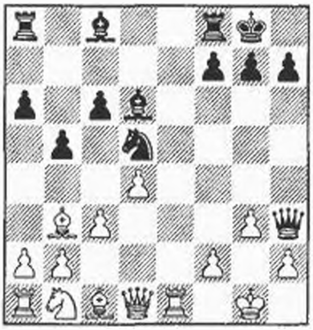
Bologan – Naiditsch
Round 6 6.08

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗a4

♘f6 5.0–0 ♗e7 6.♖e1 b5 7.♗b3 0–0 8.c3

White avoids lately the sharp lines of the Marshall attack much more often than before and prefers 8.a4 or 8.h3. Kasparov, Anand and Shirov joined the club of the 8.h3 anti – Marshall adherents. Bologan is a member of that elite club too, but he decided to enter the most principled lines in this game.

8...d5 9.exd5 ♘xd5 10.♘xe5 ♘xe5 11.♖xe5 c6 12.d4 ♗d6 13.♖e1 ♕h4 14.g3 ♕h3



15.♕f3!?

The thematic line – 15.♗e3 ♗g4 16.♕d3 ♖ae8 17.♘d2 ♖e6 etc. has been analysed to a draw. White's attempt to get an advantage after the move 15.♖e4 (with the idea to follow with 16.♖h4) cannot succeed after 15...g5!. The idea of the move of the Moldavian grandmaster 15.♕f3 is not new either. White intends to create additional pressure against the knight on d5 in order to impede the preparation of the move f7-f5 by Black. All this seems to be quite logical; nevertheless world's top-players keep neglecting this line for some reason. White has used that same idea in another fashion much more often i.e. 15.♗xd5 cxd5 16.♕f3, but Black has a powerful argument against that 16...♗f5! 17.♕xd5 ♖ae8 18.♗d2 ♗d3 19.♘a3 ♗xa3 20.bxa3 ♗c4 21.♕f3 ♕d7 22.♖xe8 ♖xe8 23.♖e1 h6 24.♖xe8+ ♕xe8∞ and as the game Chandler – P.Nikolic, Leningrad 1987 showed – Black's counterplay on the light squares is so strong that he should not worry about the outcome of the game despite being two pawns down.

15...♗e6

This humble move reduces the theoretical value of the game considerably. No doubt the basic discussions are going to be around the line: 15...♗g4 16.♕g2 ♕h5 17.♗e3. The point is that after 17...♗f3 18.♕f1 f5 19.♘d2 f4 20.♗xf4 ♖xf4 (if 20...♗xf4 21.♘xf3, then you can see that the tactics behind White's idea is that 21...♕xf3? does not work because of 22.♗d1+– and Black loses his queen) 21.♘xf3 ♖xf3 (21...♕xf3? 22.♗d1+–) 22.♗d1 ♖af8 23.♗xf3 ♕xf3 24.♕e2 ♕f7 25.♕e6± White obtains a slightly better endgame. Should Black refrain from the move 17...♗f3 and plays 17...♖ae8, then after 18.♘d2∞ he has problems to prepare f7-f5.

16.♕g2!?

This is formally a novelty. White had tested before 16.♗e3 ♖ae8 (in case of 16...a5 White can continue with 17.a4!?⩲) 17.♘d2 (it is less precise for White to play 17.♕g2 ♕h5 18.♘d2 f5 19.♗d1 ♕f7∞ Henriksson – Yurtaev, Helsinki 1992 – and Black had an excellent counterplay, because of the threat f5-f4) 17...f5 and now with the help of 18.♗f4! ♗xf4 19.gxf4 ♕h6 20.♘f1± as in the game Basualto –

Aguirre, Santiago 1998, White obtained some advantage.

16...♕h5

White would not mind trading queens after the possible: 16...♖ae8 17.♕xh3 ♗xh3 18.♗e3±. He has an extra pawn and the simplifications are favourable for him.

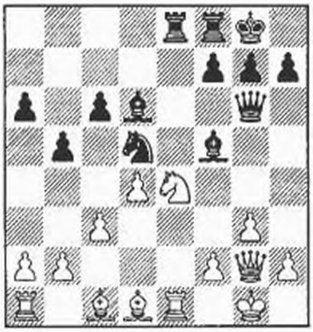
17.♗d1!

This move is quite timely otherwise after the march of the black f-pawn there might be a transposition to the abovementioned game Henriksson – Yurtaev, Helsinki 1992.

17...♕g6

White often exchanges the light-squared bishops in similar positions quite deliberately, because the attack with the black f-pawn becomes more effective then. This position is an exception though, because after 17...♗g4 18.♗xg4 ♕xg4 19.♕e4 ♕h3 20.♘d2 ♖a7 21.♕g2± recommended by Bologan, White's chances are clearly preferable, since Black loses the fight for the strategically all-important e-file.

18.♘d2 ♖ae8 19.♘e4 ♗f5



20.f3

After 20.♗f3! ♖e6 21.♗d2± (analysed by Bologan) White completes his development without any problems and preserves his extra pawn, while Black has hardly any counterplay.

20...c5!

Naiditsch opens the position. It is not good for White to capture on c5, since the a7-g1 diagonal has been weakened considerably after the move f2-f3.

21.♗d2 cxd4 22.cxd4 ♗b8

Black would not have achieved much after 22...♘b4 23.♗c3 ♘c6 (23...♘d3 24.♖e3 ♘b4 25.♗b3±) because of 24.a3 (in case of 24.d5?! ♗xe4 25.fxe4 ♘e5=∞ Black's pieces occupy excellent blocking squares in the centre of the board) 24...a5 25.♗c2 ♗c7 26.g4± recommended by Bologan.

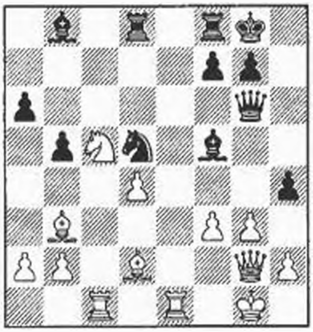
23.♗b3 ♖d8 24.♘c5

Maybe 24.♖ac1!? was even better, because after 24...h5 (24...♗a7 25.♘c5) White's move 25.♗a5 was stronger in comparison to the game.

24...h5 25.♖ac1

It was simpler for White to play 25.♗a5 ♖d6 26.♕d2 h4 27.g4 h3 28.♖e5± (Bologan's analysis).

25...h4



26.gxh4?

White makes a serious mistake here, because the exposed position of the white king becomes a telling factor. Meanwhile after 26.g4 ♗c8 27.♕f2!± (27.♗a5? ♘f4) White had all the reasons to be quite optimistic for the future, for example after 27...h3 he could play 28.♗a5 ♗c7 29.♗xc7 ♘xc7 30.♘e4 ♘e6 31.♖c6+– (Bologan).

26...♕h5?!

Black errs in his turn. After 26...♕f6! 27.♔h1 ♕xd4 28.♘xa6 ♘f4 29.♗xf4 ♗xf4≅ he has an excellent compensation for the sacrificed pawn thanks to his powerful bishop pair.

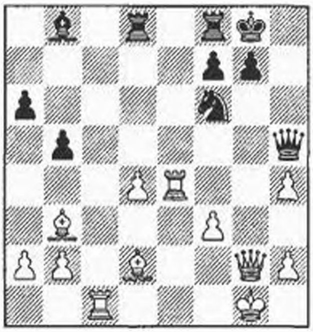
27.♘e4

White's task would have been much simpler after 27.♕g5! ♕xf3 28.♖f1 ♕g4+ 29.♕xg4 ♗xg4 30.♘xa6 ♗a7 31.♘c5±.

27...♗xe4 28.♖xe4

It is weaker for White to capture with the pawn 28.fxe4?!, because after 28...♘f4 29.♗xf4 ♗xf4 30.♖cd1 ♖d6 31.♔h1 ♖g6 32.♕f2 ♖g4 33.♖g1 ♖xh4 34.♖g2 ♕h6± Black's pressure against h2 makes White's task to realize his extra pawn really difficult due to the presence of opposite-coloured bishops on the board.

28...♘f6



29.♖e7!

Bologan finds a very strong move in a really complex position. The analysis after the game showed that White had hardly any winning chances without that powerful resource. For example after 29.♖c6 ♘xe4 30.♖h6, Black can make a draw with a temporary queen sacrifice: 30...♖xd4! 31.♖xh5 ♖xd2 32.fxe4 (White's attempt to preserve the queens on the board with – 32.♕h3? after 32...♘f6! 33.♖g5 ♖e8–+ turns out to lead to a disaster) 32...♗a7+ 33.♔h1 ♖xg2 34.♔xg2 ♗d4= and Black restores the material balance.

In case of 29.♖c5 ♕h7 30.♖e1 ♖xd4 31.♗c3 ♖xh4 32.♗xf6 ♖xh2, the series of mutual tactical strikes: 33.♗xf7+ (33.♕xg7+ ♕xg7+ 34.♗xg7 ♔xg7=) 33...♖xf7 34.♖e8+ ♖f8 35.♖xf8+ ♔xf8 36.♖c8+ ♔f7 37.♕xg7+ ♕xg7+ 38.♗xg7 ♔xg7 39.♖xb8 ♖xb2= (Bologan) leads finally to an absolutely equal rook and pawn endgame.

29...♖xd4

After 29...♕xh4 30.♗g5! (in case of 30.♕f2 ♕xd4 31.♕xd4 ♖xd4 32.♗a5± Black must defend an inferior endgame, but that is definitely the least of evils for him under the circumstances) 30...♕xd4+ 31.♔h1→ Black comes under the gun outright. For example in case of 31...♗e5 White wins with 32.♖g1 ♘d5 (32...♘h7 33.♖xf7+–) 33.f4! ♘xf4 (33...♘xe7 34.fxe5+–) 34.♗xf4 ♕xf4 (34...♗xf4 35.♖e4+–) 35.♖f1 ♕e3 36.♗xf7+ ♖xf7 37.♖exf7 ♖d2 38.♖7f2+– and his extra exchange should be quite sufficient to win the game.

30.♗g5 ♘d5 31.♕f2!

Black's rook has a problem now to find a good square to retreat to.

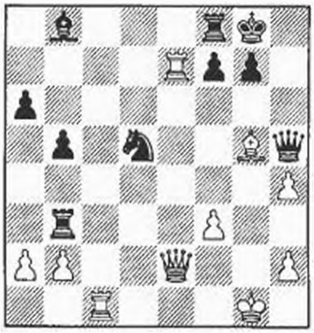
31...♖d3

The line 31...♘xe7 32.♕xd4± would

not have made Naiditsch happy, because White's bishop pair would have been totally dominant.

32.♕e2 ♖xb3?

This loses immediately. Black would not have saved the game either with 32...♖d4, because of 33.♖e8! ♗xh2+ 34.♔f2 ♗d6 35.♖xf8+ ♗xf8 36.♕e8 (36.♕e5!? ♖d2+ 37.♔e1+–) 36...♘f6 (36...♘b6 37.♖c7+–) 37.♗xf6 gxf6 38.♗xf7+! ♕xf7 39.♖g1+ ♕g7 40.♖xg7+ ♔xg7 41.h5+– analysed by Bologan. Black's best chance probably was 32...♘xe7 33.♕xd3± or 32...♕g6 33.♖e8 ♗d6 34.♔h1!± (but not 34.♖cc8 due to 34...♖e3! 35.♖xe3 ♖xc8 36.♗xd5 ♖c1+ 37.♔f2 ♖c2 38.♖e8+ ♔h7 39.♗d2 ♗c5+ 40.♖e3 ♖xb2∞) but his position would have remained quite difficult too.



33.♖e8!+–

White's pieces are attacking the black king decisively along the 8th rank now.

33...♗a7+ 34.♔h1 ♖xf3

It is too bad for Black to play 34...♖c3 35.bxc3+–, as well as 34...♕xf3+ 35.♕xf3 ♖xf3 36.♖xf8+ ♔h7 (36...♔xf8?? 37.♖c8#) and now the fastest way for White to win is to follow with 37.h5! ♗d4 38.♖d8!? ♖f5 39.♖cc8! g6 40.hxg6+ ♔xg6 41.♗c1+– recommended by R.Scherbakov.

35.♖xf8+ ♔h7 36.♕e4+ 1–0

150 B90

Leko – Anand

Round 6 6.08

Notes by S. Shipov

The Indian grandmaster was the luckier in the battle between two of the favourites of the tournament. He managed to exploit in a sharp Sicilian battle the mistakes in the time-trouble of his Hungarian colleague.

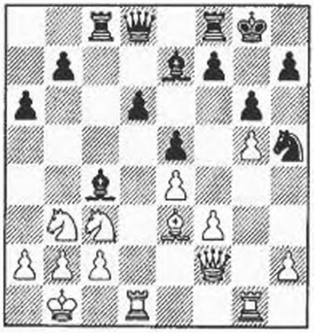
1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 a6 6.f3 e5

This line seems to be more reliable than 6...e6, because the dangerous white knight is repelled from the centre immediately. However Black must play in this variation, just like in the other one too, very precisely and should know a lot as well.

7.♘b3 ♗e6 8.♗e3 ♘bd7 9.g4 ♘b6 10.g5 ♘h5 11.♕d2 ♗e7 12.0–0–0 ♖c8 13.♖g1 0–0

Let me not comment on all these moves, since they are all very well known in the theory and they are quite logical too...

14.♔b1 g6 15.♕f2 ♘c4 16.♗xc4 ♗xc4



17.♘a4!?

This happens to be a novelty! The white knight goes to d5 anyway, but via a longer route. Black managed to equalize in a game between the same two opponents before – 17.♕d2 ♕c7 18.♖g2 f5 19.♘d5 ♗xd5 20.♕xd5+ ♔h8 21.c3 ♕c6 22.♘a5 ♕xd5 23.♖xd5 b5 – and a draw was agreed to, Anand – Leko, Monaco 2003. The game was much sharper in an encounter that was played a month before our game: 17.f4 – this attempt to break in the centre is much more logical – 17...exf4 18.♗xf4 ♘xf4 19.♕xf4 f6!. This counterstrike is just timely. 20.gxf6 ♗xf6 21.♖xd6 ♕e7 22.♕d2 ♖cd8 – and Black had a good counterplay, because of his bishop pair, Smirin – Savchenko, Istanbul 2003.

17...♗e6 18.♘b6 ♖c7

If 18...♖c6 then White has 19.♘a5.

19.♕d2

It looked very good for White to play 19.h4, because Black had no other counterplay except f7-f6. The well supported g5-outpost might have turned out handy at some moment then...

19...♖c6 20.♘d5 ♗xd5 21.exd5!?

This positional decision is rather non-standard! White exchanges the d5-outpost for the e4-square. This seems to be quite reasonable here. The white knight on b3 can go to d5 in four moves if at all, while it can go to e4 in two moves only!

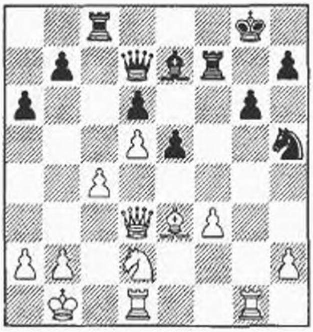
21...♖c8 22.♕d3!

The white queen is clearing the way for the knight!

22...♕d7 23.c4 f6!

This is the correct positional decision for Black. He can obtain some counterplay only if he opens the f-file. The queen diversion can be dangerous only for him after: 23...♕h3 24.♘d2 ♕xh2. And in case of 25.♖h1 ♘f4 (25...♕g3 26.♖dg1+−) 26.♖xh2 ♘xd3 27.♘e4 ♘f4 28.c5! Black is in big trouble despite his extra pawn.

24.gxf6 ♖xf6 25.♘d2 ♖f7



26.♖c1

Just a month after that game White's play was improved radically in an encounter between the two best French players – 26.c5! – it turns out that White can break in the centre immediately – 26...♖d8 (After 26...dxc5 White has the powerful move 27.♘c4) 27.cxd6 ♗xd6 28.♗g5 ♖df8 29.♗h6 ♘f4 30.♕b3 ♖d8 31.♗xf4 ♖xf4 32.♘e4 and the strong white passed pawn supported by the almighty white knight, proved good enough to decide the game, Bacrot – Lautier, Aix les Bains 2003.

26...♕f5 27.♖c3 b5!

Black starts active operations in anticipation of White's pawn-break c4-c5. The game becomes very complicated now.

28.b3

The endgame after: 28.cxb5 ♖xc3 29.♕xf5 ♖xf5 30.bxc3 axb5 is in favour of Black. It is not clear how White can parry the threat ♘h5-f6xd5.

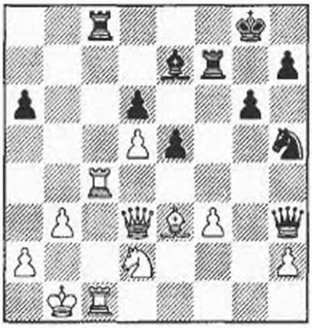
28...♕h3!?

Vishy felt that the white king was rather vulnerable and decided to preserve the queens on the board.

29.♖gc1

It deserved attention for White to play more energetically in the centre – 29.c5!? dxc5 30.d6 ♗d8 31.♖gc1 etc.

29...bxc4 30.♖xc4



30...♖a8!

This is exquisite! Grandmasters play sometimes like this in Swiss tournaments against amateurs. They keep the tension during the time-trouble, complicate the game and finally manage to provoke a decisive mistake. It is amazing that even a super-professional like Leko succumbed in the end against that strategy.

31.♖a4

It was better for White to play 31.♖c7.

31...♗f8 32.a3

The time-trouble has deadly consequences – the logical connection between the moves disappeared. In case of 32.♖xa6 Black had prepared the tactical strike 32...e4!.

32...♘f6 33.♗g5

White's task is clear – to place the knight on e4.

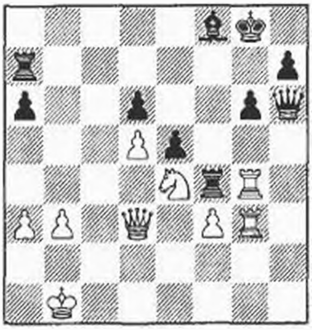
33...♕xh2

Black's goal is to capture pawns and to complicate the game!

34.♖h4 ♕g2 35.♗xf6 ♖xf6 36.♖g4 ♕h3 37.♖cg1

Peter would have never placed his rooks like that under normal conditions...

37...♖a7 38.♖1g3 ♕h6 39.♘e4 ♖f4



40.♖xf4?

Leko has played until now 39 relatively good moves more or less. He blunders right before the time-control and opens the diagonal of death. Every other move would have enabled him to continue the fight. Well, White is a pawn down and his king is weak, but his knight on e4 is very powerful and he can create a passed pawn on the queenside sometime in the future. There was still plenty of fight left, while now everything was over in a few moves...

40...♕h1+!

Peter obviously overlooked that intermediate check.

41.♔a2 exf4 42.♖g4 ♗g7

The white king now has nothing left but run...

43.b4 a5!

The black rook joins in the pursuit

too.

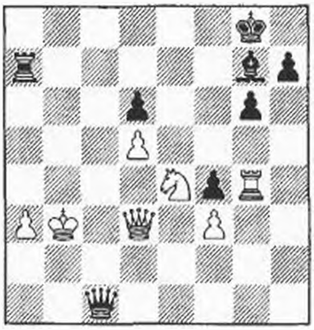
44.♔b3

The line: 44.b5 ♕a1+ 45.♔b3 a4+ 46.♔b4 ♕b2+ 47.♔c4 ♖c7+ ends in a disaster for White too.

44...axb4 45.♔xb4

45.a4 ♕a1!.

45...♕e1+ 46.♔b3 ♕c1! 0–1



The fugitive was captured and White resigned.

151 D38

Radjabov – Kramnik

Round 6 6.08

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 d5 4.♘c3 ♗b4

This was a surprise, since Kramnik had never played like that before.

5.♕a4+

After 5.♗g5 h6 6.♗xf6 (6.♗h4 dxc4!) 6...♕xf6 7.e3 0–0 8.♖c1 dxc4 9.♗xc4 c5= Black equalizes easily as a rule. Therefore White's basic theoretical line continues to be: 5.cxd5 exd5 6.♗g5 h6 (after 6...♘bd7, Kramnik with White introduced the move 7.♕c2!? at top-level) 7.♗h4 g5 8.♗g3 ♘e4 9.♘d2 and now after accepting the sacrifice with 9...♘xc3 (in case of 9...♘xg3 10.hxg3 c5 11.dxc5 ♘c6, Black has the move 12.e4!?± to worry about) 10.bxc3 ♗xc3 11.♖c1 ♗a5 12.h4=∞ White's prospects look very good.

5...♘c6 6.e3

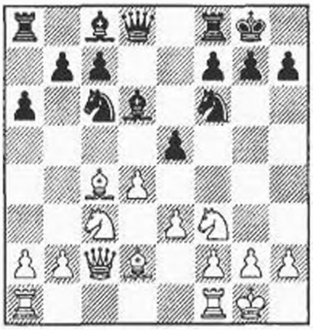
The move 6.a3 leads to more complicated positions.

6...0–0 7.♗d2 dxc4

The opponents could have reached the situation that happened later, two moves earlier by transposition with: 7...a6 8.♕c2 dxc4 9.♗xc4 ♗d6 10.0–0 e5= as it was played in the game Borges – Gongora, Havana 2003.

8.♗xc4 ♗d6 9.♘b5 ♗e7 10.0–0 a6 11.♘c3 ♗d6 12.♕c2 e5=

This is Black's most direct road to equality. The game V.Georgiev – Milov, Geneve 2004 – 12...b5 13.♗e2 ♗b7 14.a4 b4 15.♘e4 ♘xe4 16.♕xe4 ♘a5∞ developed in another fashion and led to a position with mutual chances.



13.dxe5

The game Borges – Gongora, Havana 2003, that we mentioned before continued with: 13.d5 ♘e7 14.e4 ♘g6 15.♖fe1 h6 16.♗f1 ♘h5 17.♗e3 ♘hf4 18.♘d2 ♕f6⇄ and Black had a comfortable lively piece play.

13...♘xe5 14.♘xe5 ♗xe5 15.f4 ♗d6 16.♗d3 ♔h8 17.♔h1

White is preparing the advance of the e-pawn. The immediate 17.e4? was premature because of 17...♗c5+ 18.♔h1 ♘g4∓.

17...b5 18.♘e4

Teimour refrained from the move 18.e4 again, probably because of the line 18...♗b7 19.e5 ♘g4⇄.

18...♗f5

Now, there follow unavoidable exchanges that lead to a peaceful outcome of the game.

19.♘xf6 ♗xd3 20.♕xd3 ♕xf6 21.♗c3 ♕e6 22.c4 f6 23.b3 ½ – ½

152 B17

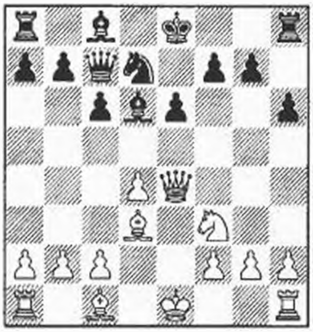
Anand – Bologan

Round 7 7.08

Notes by S. Shipov

This game witnessed the appearance of an opening novelty of a paramount importance. Vishy destroyed the shelter of the black king just spectacularly and buried the whole variation...

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 dxe4 4.♘xe4 ♘d7 5.♘g5 ♘gf6 6.♗d3 e6 7.♘1f3 ♗d6 8.♕e2 h6 9.♘e4 ♘xe4 10.♕xe4 ♕c7

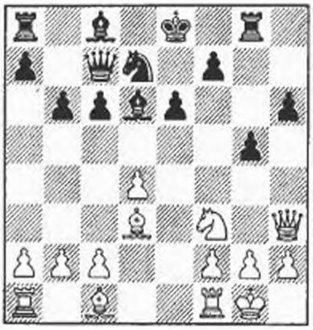


Black is usually not in a hurry to oust the white queen away from the centre in this line of the Caro-Kann. The other possibility of course was – 10...♘f6.

11.0–0 b6 12.♕g4 g5?

The question mark has been put here because of the result of the game, just like every bad commentator does. Still I believe that to be justified here and the evaluation is quite objective in this case. I intend to prove this later in my comments... It is already easy to assert that from now on Black should play here 12...♔f8 as an only move! Viorel Bologan played like that sometime later...

13.♕h3 ♖g8



Black has played his last two moves with the idea to seize the initiative on the kingside. He is threatening to play g5-g4 and win a piece. I believe this line is going to disappear from the tournament practice after that game...

14.♖e1!

This is the novelty that changes radically the evaluation of this opening line! White ignores the threat of the opponent and creates a threat of his own instead. I believe that innovation was born in Anand's home analysis with the help of a computer. I even think that I can tell which program Vishy has used! The good old Fritz cannot withstand the threat g5-g4 and recommends a certain degree of safety, while the fearless Junior is quick to point out the move with the white rook as one of the best. This is all followed by supremely complicated variations...

Capturing of the pawn with 14.♕xh6?? is a blunder after 14...♗f8 15.♕h7 ♘f6 16.♕h3 g4–+. Therefore White retreated with the knight invariably before – 14.♘d2 and after 14...♗b7! Black managed to evacuate his king easily to the queenside. For example: 15.♘c4 0–0–0 16.c3 c5 17.a4 ♗f4 18.♖e1 ♘f6, and Black had an excellent position in the game, Vallejo Pons – Macieja, Ohrid 2001.

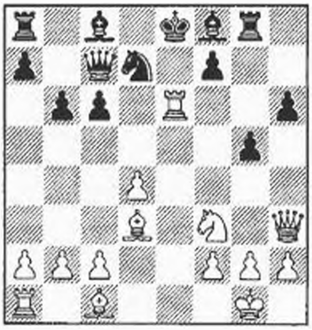
14...♗f8

This is an attempt to avoid the main line of the preparation of the opponent. After the most principled move 14...g4 White realizes easily his main idea – the tactical strike on e6: 15.♕xh6 gxf3 16.♖xe6+! fxe6 (16...♗e7 17.♖xe7+! ♔xe7 18.♗f4+–) 17.♕xe6+ ♗e7 (in the line 17...♔f8 18.♗h6+ ♖g7, White's simplest resource is: 19.♗xg7+ ♔xg7 20.♕g6+ ♔f8 21.♗c4!) 18.♕xg8+ ♘f8. Anand points out here a really spectacular line: 19.♗g6+!? ♔d7 20.♗f5+ ♔e8 21.♗h6!! ♕d6 (21...♗xf5 22.♖e1 ♔d7 23.♖xe7+! ♔xe7 24.♕g7+) 22.♗xf8 ♗xf8 23.♖e1+ ♔d8 24.♕f7 ♗e7 25.♗xc8 ♖xc8 26.♕xf3±. Nevertheless I believe that it is stronger and also simpler for White to play 19.♗c4 ♕d6 (19...♗d6 20.♗f4!) 20.♕f7+ ♔d8 21.♕xf3 and he has four pawns for the knight and a powerful attack too.

Black has no time for development here: 14...♗b7 15.♖xe6+! fxe6 16.♕xe6+ ♔f8 17.♕xh6+ ♖g7 18.♗c4! and he is helpless against the check on h8.

15.♕f5

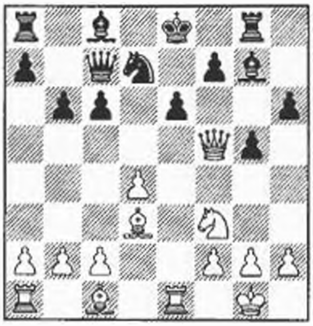
Vishy decided to preserve the tension after some reflection. White's queen is headed for h7. The most principled line was of course 15.♖xe6+!.



The analysis shows that Black does not have any satisfactory defence, for example: 15...♔d8 (15...fxe6? 16.♕xe6+ ♔d8 17.♕xg8+–) 16.♖xh6! (the other retreats of the rook are not so interesting) 16...♘f6 (in case of 16...♘e5 17.♕g3 ♘xf3+ 18.♕xf3 ♗xh6 19.♕f6+ ♕e7 20.♕xc6± ♗b7 21.♕xh6, White has three pawns for the exchange and Black's checkmating threats along the first rank do not work. The other line is a disaster for Black after: 16...♗xh6 17.♕xh6 f6 18.♘xg5!) 17.♗f5 g4 18.♕h4 ♗xh6 (18...gxf3 19.♖xf6!) 19.♕xf6+ (this is White's obvious continuation, but he can play something else too...) 19...♕e7 20.♕xc6! (White comes out ahead in the contest between the greedy...) 20...gxf3 21.♗xh6! (the intermediate move 21.♕d5+ is not precise, because of 21...♔c7! 22.♗xh6 ♖xg2+ 23.♔h1 ♖xh2+! 24.♔xh2 ♕h4+ 25.♔g1 ♗xf5, and the black rook becomes really dangerous for the white king) 21...♗b7 22.♕b5 ♖xg2+ 23.♔h1 – and White has some edge in this complicated position. It is presently impossible for Black to capture the f2-pawn – 23...♖xf2? 24.♗g5! with a checkmate on g7 to follow. On the other hand it is even stronger for White to play – 19.♘e5! ♔e7 20.♗xc8 ♗xc1 21.♖xc1 ♖axc8 22.♖e1 – and his attack continues with several pawns for the rook after: 22...♖ce8 23.♖e3! and if White does not blunder a checkmate along the first rank, he is going to capture at least the black knight on f6. The material balance will be restored then and his attack is going to continue. In short, after 15.♖xe6! White is simply winning...

15...♗g7

It was more reliable for Black to defend with 15...♖g6, and White had to comply with a slight positional edge after – 16.♗d2 (16.h4 ♗e7!) 16...♗b7 17.c4 ♖f6 (otherwise Black cannot castle, because the f7-pawn is hanging) 18.♕h7 0–0–0 19.♘e5! and the black rook on f6 is in a precarious situation...



16.h4!

This is the idea of the manoeuvre of the queen to f5 – the white h-pawn is now free for action and the black g5-pawn is destroyed as a defender.

16...♔f8 17.♕h3

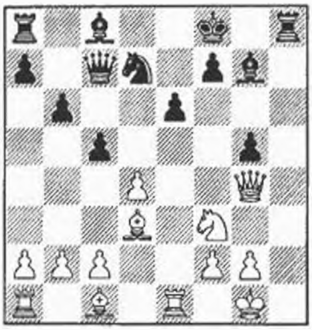
The tactical strike 17.♖xe6?! gets refuted after 17...♘c5, or 17...♘e5.

17...♖h8!

Viorel is defending very cleverly here. Black can get some counterplay along the h-file just in case.

18.hxg5 hxg5 19.♕g4 c5

In short, pawns are just trifles in this position. It is much more important to develop quickly and seize the initiative.



20.♗xg5! cxd4

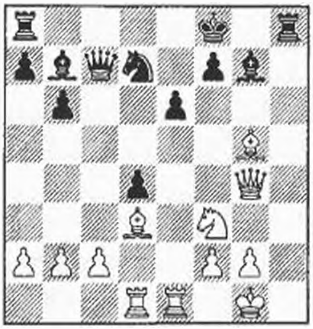
After 20...♗b7 White can play 21.♗f4 followed by a check with the bishop on d6. Now Black can counter the same manoeuvre of the white bishop with e6-e5.

21.♖ad1!

This is a good preparatory move after which White has completed the mobilization of his forces. After 21.♗e7+ ♔g8∞ 22.♗e4 ♖b8∞ the position would have been unclear.

21...♗b7?

This attractive move reduces the defence of a very vulnerable pawn. It is far from easy to recommend a satisfactory defence for Black, though. For example: 21...♘c5 22.♗f4 ♕d8 (22...e5? 23.♕xg7+ ♔xg7 24.♗xe5+) 23.♕g3 ♗b7 24.♗d6+ ♔g8 25.♗e5 – and White has an extra pawn and a powerful attack too; 21...♘e5 22.♘xe5 ♗xe5 23.♖xe5! ♕xe5 24.♗f4 ♕d5 (24...♕c5 25.♕f3) 25.c4! and White has again an overwhelming attack for the exchange. Black has also another possibility – to play the move 21...♕c5, avoiding the threats against the queen and threatening the manoeuvre ♗c8-b7xf3, after which White's bishop on g5 might become vulnerable. White is of course better again, but there is no direct win for him in sight.



22.♖xe6!

This works now in spite of all precautions by Black! It is in fact really rewarding that the main idea of Anand's novelty sees the light in this game! White's centralized pieces are totally prepared for action.

22...fxe6

Black must have something worth suffering for! After 22...♗xf3 23.♕xf3 he has only a single check and therefore he should better capture the rook from the practical point of view.

23.♗e7+!

The possibility of this move is essentially a part of the idea behind the first sacrifice. It was principally wrong for White to continue with 23.♕xe6 ♘c5.

23...♔xe7

Black would not have changed anything with 23...♔f7 24.♕g6+.

24.♕xg7+ ♔d6

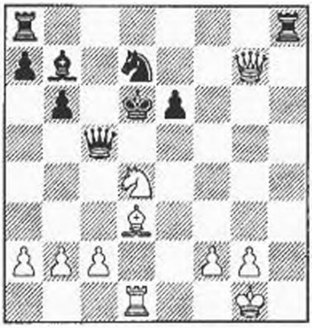
The black king has to go bravely forward in order to save the rook on h8.

25.♘xd4!

It is always beautiful to continue an attack with quiet moves...

25...♕c5

Black's other way to activate the queen with 25...♕d8 would not have helped either after 26.♘b5+ ♔c6 27.♗e2!+–



26.♗f5!?

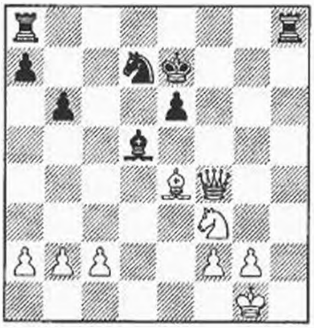
This move is a consequence of the multitude of possibilities! White could have used so many lines in order to open effectively the d-file. Vishy decided to do that in a spectacular fashion for art's sake. It was much more practical for White to accomplish that with the routine: 26.♘b5+ ♔c6 27.♗e2! and the mating net around the black king is impossible to untangle.

26...♕e5!

This is the most stubborn defence.

After 26...exf5 White wins with 27.♘b5+ ♔e6 28.♖xd7. Black's attempt to interpose on the file of death in this game does not work after – 26...♗d5 27.♗xe6 ♗xe6 28.♘xe6+ ♔xe6 29.♕xd7+ ♔f6 (29...♔e5 30.♖e1+) 30.♖d6+ and he loses his queen for a rook. The arising endgame with a queen and three pawns for White against a couple of rooks for Black is an easy win for White.

27.♘f3+ ♕d5 28.♕g3+ ♔e7 29.♖xd5 ♗xd5 30.♕g5+ ♔d6 31.♕f4+ ♔e7 32.♗e4



So, White remained with a queen and two pawns for two rooks. Black might try to build something like a fortress around his basic defensive e6-pawn. His king is too weak however and White's attack continues victoriously...

32...♖h5

In case of 32...♗xe4 33.♕xe4, Black loses one more pawn by force – 33...♖af8 (33...a5 34.♘d4 ♘c5 35.♕c6 ♖ab8 36.♕c7+ ♔f6 37.♘c6, followed by a capture on b6.) 34.♘d4 ♖f6 35.♘c6+ ♔f7 36.♘xa7 ♖fh6 37.g3 etc.

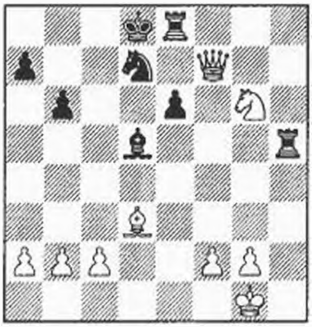
33.♘h4 ♖g8

Or 33...♗xe4 34.♕xe4 ♖g8 35.♘g6+ ♔f7 36.♘f4 ♖e5 37.♕b7 ♔e7 38.♕xa7+–

34.♘g6+ ♔d8

34...♔e8 35.♕d6!.

35.♕f7 ♖e8 36.♗d3 1–0



White was winning immediately after 36.g4 ♖g5 37.♕f4!. The move in the game created the threats ♗d3-b5 as well as ♘g6-f8. Black could have defended against both of them with the move 37...♗c6, but Viorel decided to terminate his agony... This game was played just magnificently by Anand!

153 **B32**

Leko – Radjabov

Round 7 7.08

Notes by S. Shipov

The junior from Azerbaidjan plays usually quite inspiringly with Black and he manages to avoid defeat in this game. His experienced opponent played that encounter excellently and he was very close to winning, but he failed to crown his efforts at the end. Well, Teimour's stubborn resistance was the culprit...

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 e5

The Kalashnikov system brought Teimour success in his game against Anand. He is trying it again, but he is not so effective this time...

5.♘b5 d6 6.c4 ♗e7 7.♘1c3

Vishy played here 7.b3 and he was a little worse after the opening. White does not need to think about a shelter for the bishop on b2, because Black does not intend to play ♗e7-g5 at all!

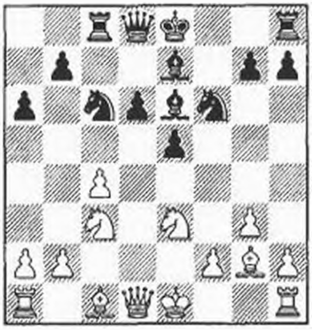
7...a6 8.♘a3 f5 9.exf5 ♗xf5 10.♘c2 ♘f6 11.♘e3 ♗e6 12.g3

White plans to occupy the light squares in the centre.

12...♖c8N

This is a new idea or much rather an introduction to it! Alexey Shirov started activating his dark-squared bishop immediately – 12...♕d7 13.♗g2 ♗d8!? 14.0–0 ♗b6 15.♘ed5 ♗d4 16.♗e3 ♗xc3 17.♘b6 ♕d8 18.bxc3 ♖b8 19.♖b1 0–0 20.♘d5 and the position was very complex and double-edged, Topalov – Shirov, Monaco 2003.

13.♗g2



13...b5

That is it! Radjabov liquidates the c4-pawn, just like in his game against Anand, in order to dominate in the centre.

14.cxb5 axb5 15.0–0!

This is the correct positional decision. White sticks to his general plan to occupy the d5-square! The greedy 15.♘xb5 was presenting Black with a powerful initiative after 15...d5.

15...♘d4 16.♘ed5 ♘xd5

It was a little better for Black to castle immediately.

17.♘xd5 0–0 18.♗e3

White's cavalry is much more stable in the fight for the centre.

18...♗f6

Black would not equalize with 18...♘f5 19.♕d3! either.

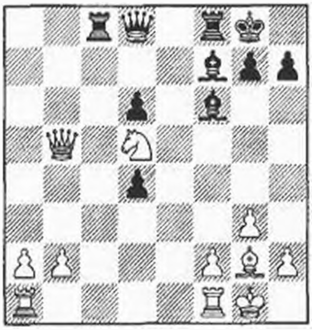
19.♗xd4 exd4 20.♕e2

This is a double attack – against e6 and b5.

20...♗f7

Black sacrifices a pawn in order to increase the pressure against the knight on d5. It was bad for him to play 20...♕d7? 21.♘b6. Black had a sound but passive position after 20...♗d7.

21.♕xb5



White has now two connected passed pawns on the queenside and that is very promising for the endgame. After some time only one pawn will remain, though...

21...♖c5

After 21...♖b8 22.♕e2 d3 23.♕xd3

♗xb2 24.♖ab1± White is clearly better.

22.♕b7 d3!

It is time for Black to free his bishops.

23.♕b3!

This move enabled Black...to make a mistake. His sensible alternative was the line: 23.♖ad1 ♖c2 24.♖xd3 ♖xb2 25.♕a6 etc.

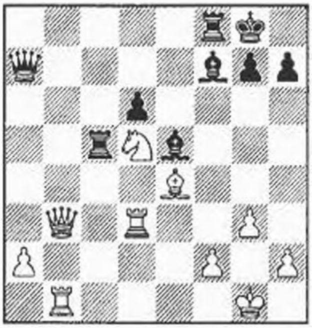
23...♗xb2?!

Black is in a hurry to win material! It was much better for him to play 23...♖c2! 24.♕xd3 (White does not get any advantage after 24.♖ab1 ♗d4 25.♕xd3 ♗xf2+ 26.♔h1 ♗g6 27.♗e4 ♗xe4+ 28.♕xe4 ♕a8!) 24...♖xb2 and the only way for White to keep his a2-pawn is to play 25.a4 ♖xf2 – and White is still a little better despite the material equality, but it will hardly be sufficient to win the game.

24.♖ad1 ♗e5 25.♖xd3

White managed to consolidate his position and remained with an extra pawn.

25...♕a5 26.♖b1 ♕a7 27.♗e4



White is playing checkers! He places all his pieces on light squares and meanwhile they are all defending each other.

27...♖a5 28.♖d2 ♗e6 29.♔g2 ♗d4 30.f3 ♗c5 31.♕c2

White is already threatening something.

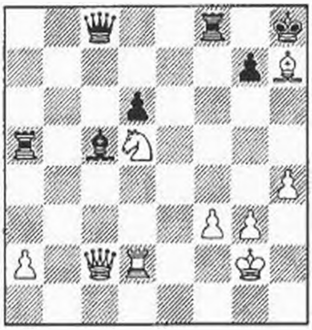
31...♔h8 32.♘c3 ♕f7 33.♖b7 ♕h5 34.h4

This was correct otherwise White was checkmated in two.

34...♗c8 35.♖c7 ♕h6 36.♘d5 ♕e6

The Black queen is once again threatening to go to h3 and this time it is a checkmate in one! Peter obviously got fed up with all this...

37.♖xc8! ♕xc8 38.♗xh7



White now has two pawns for the exchange and a total domination on the light squares.

38...♕e6 39.♗e4 ♕e5 40.♖e2 ♖a3

Black does not have any counterplay and his king is really vulnerable.

41.♕d2

White is preparing to bring his knight to f4.

41...♗d4

After 41...♕a1 42.♘f4 ♕g1+ 43.♔h3 ♕f1 44.♔g4 Black has no more checks, while White is just starting...

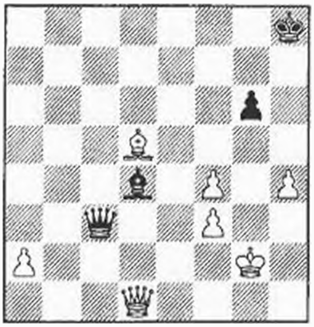
42.♘f4 ♖xf4

What else can Black do?

43.gxf4 ♕c5 44.♕d1 d5

This is both a kind of desperation of the doomed and valour on the part of someone intent on ruling his own fate and fortune!

45.♖c2 ♖c3 46.♖xc3 ♕xc3 47.♗xd5 g6



How can it be possible not to win this endgame with three extra pawns for White? I think Leko must have been terribly tired.

48.♔g3

The simplest way to win is 48.♗e4 ♔g7 (48...♕e3 49.♔h3!) 49.f5! and White gets rid of his doubled pawn and exchanges the last enemy pawn.

48...♔g7 49.♗e4 ♕e3

Black's only chance is to attack the white king, because White might blunder a perpetual at some moment!

50.♕f1

It is not good for White to play now 50.f5 ♕f2+ 51.♔h3 ♗e5!. His best chance still was 50.♔h3, because that was the right square for the king.

50...♗f6 51.a4 ♔h6 52.a5 ♔h5

Black's new threat to capture the h4-pawn confused Peter so much that he missed the winning line altogether.

53.♕b5+

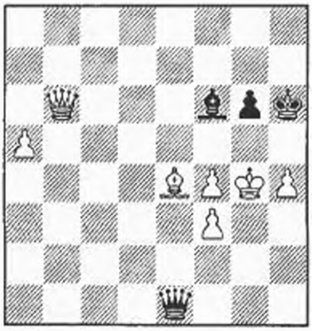
White had to simply ignore Black's threat – 53.a6! ♗xh4+ 54.♔h3 ♗f6 (54...♕xf4 55.♕g1!; 54...♗f2 55.♕g2) 55.♕g2 and suddenly Black's active king was in a grave danger.

53...♔h6 54.♕f1 ♔h5 55.♕b5+ ♔h6 56.♕b1

Otherwise there would be a repetition of moves – 56.♕b6 ♕e1+ 57.♔g2 ♕d2+!.

56...♗c3 57.♕b6 ♕e1+ 58.♔g4 ♗f6!

This was a beautiful trick indeed!



59.♕xf6?

The fighter had no more strength left to continue the fight and he decided to capture something and get it over with...Meanwhile he could still have continued to play for a win with: 59.♗xg6! ♔xg6 60.h5+ ♔f7 61.♔f5! – and White would have four pawns for the bishop and the initiative, so Black's defence would have been really hard.

59...♕g1+ 60.♔h3 ½ – ½

Black now has a perpetual and a draw! Unfortunately, one of the favourites of the tournament failed to make even 50 %.

154 **B47**

Naiditsch – Kramnik

Round 7 7.08

Notes by S. Shipov

There was not a really serious fight

in that game...

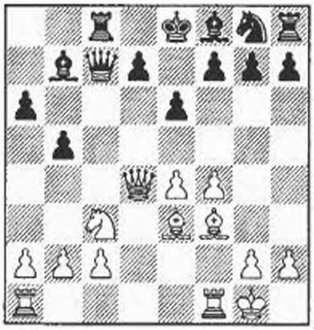
1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♘c3 e6 4.d4 cxd4 5.♘xd4 a6 6.f4 ♘xd4 7.♕xd4 ♕c7

This is one of the rare lines of the Paulsen variation.

8.♗e3 b5 9.♗e2 ♗b7 10.♗f3 ♖c8

Black's first priority was to develop his queenside and then he could even play on the kingside depending on White's actions.

11.0–0



11...♘e7

Black's tentativeness is quite justified because after 11...♘f6 12.e5 ♗xf3 White has 13.exf6!.

12.♔h1

This is a novelty and a useful prophylactic too. You will appreciate the idea much better if you see the following game: 12.a3?! d5! 13.♔h1 (after 13.exd5 ♘f5 14.♕d3 ♘xe3 15.♕xe3 ♗c5 White loses his queen) 13...dxe4 14.♗xe4 ♗xe4 15.♕xe4 ♘f5 16.♗g1 ♗e7 17.♖fe1 0–0 and Black had a slight edge in the game, Manik – J.Horvath, Budapest 2000. White's most principled move here naturally is 12.♖ad1. The game Kiselev – Tunik, Voronezh 2001, continued 12...♘c6 (12...d5 13.g4 ♘c6) 13.♕d3 ♗e7 14.e5 ♘a5 15.♗xb7 ♕xb7 16.♘e4 ♕d5 17.♕xd5 exd5 18.♖xd5 ♖xc2 19.♖f2 ♖c4 20.♘g3 g6 21.b3 ♖c7 22.♖fd2 and White was clearly better. I remained completely amazed why Black did not play 12...d5! – ? The rest is a matter of home analysis...

12...♘c6 13.♕d3 ♗e7 14.♖ad1 d6!

Black is preparing to castle, otherwise the d7 pawn is hanging, avoiding the unpleasant move by White – e4-e5 with a positional bind.

15.a4 b4 16.♘e2 0–0

Black managed to develop all his pieces, evacuated the king and equalized completely!

17.b3

White deprives himself of the possibility to play c2-c3 at some moment with the idea to try to bring back his knight to its superior c3-square. This is still not a mistake, but...

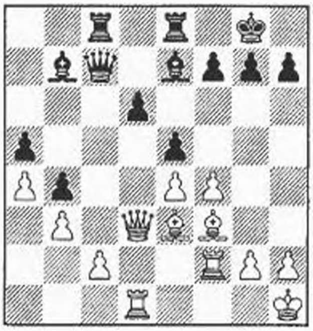
17...a5 18.♖f2

That is a little bit too defensive...

18...♖fe8 19.♘d4 ♘xd4

Naturally Black should not let that knight to the b5-square.

20.♗xd4 e5 21.♗e3



Black already has some initiative because the white pawns on e4 and c2 need protection.

21...♕c6

It was probably not so easy for Black to calculate correctly the complications after 21...d5!? to the end. By the way, both opponents were playing rather tentatively up to that moment... Black had an interesting possibility though: 21...♗f6!? with the idea to place that bishop on e5. In case White plays 22.f5 Black has the powerful pawn-break in the centre 22...d5! 23.exd5 e4! 24.♗xe4 ♕e5 25.♖f4 ♖c3 and White loses material. Should White capture the pawn with 22.♕xd6, Black exchanges on f4 and recaptures the e4-pawn with some initiative in the endgame.

22.f5 ♕c3 23.♕e2 ♖c6 24.♖d3

White is up in arms and armour!

24...♕a1+ 25.♖d1 ♕c3

After 25...♕b2 White has the annoying 26.♕b5.

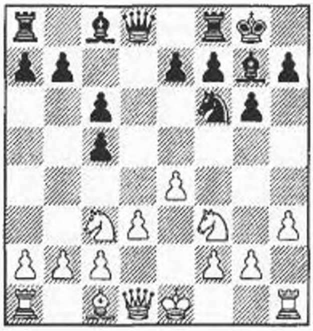
26.♖d3 ♕a1+ 27.♖d1 ½ – ½

155 **B31**

Bologan – Leko

Round 8 8.08

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 g6 4.♗xc6 dxc6 5.d3 ♗g7 6.h3 ♘f6 7.♘c3 0–0



White has two different plans at his disposal here: to castle short and to try to prepare f2-f4 (as Adams played against Leko in Dortmund 2002), or to castle long and to try to attack and checkmate.

8.♗e3 b6 9.♕d2 e5 10.♗h6

After 10.♘xe5 ♘xe4! 11.♘xf7 ♘xd2 12.♘xd8 ♘f3+ 13.gxf3 ♖xd8=∞, Black gets a very good compensation for the pawn.

10...♕d6 11.g4

In case of 11.0–0–0 Leko played 11...a5, in his games: Grischuk – Leko, Moscow 2002, and Shirov – Leko, Dortmund 2002, and 11...b5 in the game Grischuk – Leko, Dubai 2002. Black did not have any problems after the opening in anyone of the three games.

11...♗e6

The opponents were following the game Ponomariov – Leko, Linares 2003. Ruslan chose a strange plan here starting with the move 12.♕e3 and later he became even worse as a result.

12.♘e2

After the seemingly active 12.♗xg7 ♔xg7 13.0–0–0 Leko demonstrated a precise method of neutralizing White's initiative: 13...♖ad8 14.♖hf1 b5 15.♘g5 h6 16.♘xe6+ ♕xe6 17.♔b1 c4= Shirov – Leko, Monaco 2002.

12...♖ad8 13.♗xg7 ♔xg7 14.♕c3 ♘d7 15.♘g5 h6 16.♘xe6+ fxe6!?

16...♕xe6 would be countered by White with the unpleasant 17.f4, threatening f4-f5.

17.♔f1

Now after 17.f4 Black has the simple defence 17...♔h7.

17...♖f3 18.♔g2 ♖df8 19.♖af1 ½ – ½

156 **D39**

Kramnik – Anand

Round 8 8.08

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 d5 4.♘c3 dxc4 5.e4 ♗b4 6.♗g5 c5 7.♗xc4 cxd4 8.♘xd4 ♗xc3+ 9.bxc3 ♕a5 10.♗b5+

The twelfth world-champion Anatoly Karpov usually plays here 10.♘b5.

10...♗d7

The other possibility for Black is 10...♘bd7.

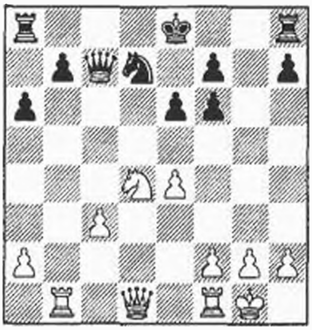
11.♗xf6 gxf6 12.♗xd7+

Kramnik decided not to test Anand's preparation against 12.♕b3, as it was played in the game Kramnik – Piket, Monaco 2000.

12...♘xd7 13.0–0 a6

Black is preparing to place his queen on the c7-square. Moves like – 13...♕xc3 are not even considered among players of that caliber. It is not because of any concrete lines – safety comes above all.

14.♖b1 ♕c7



15.♕g4

This is a new move. White usually developed his queen to h5 before and Black's king was quite comfortable then on e7.

15...h5

Naturally Anand avoided the simple tactical strike: 15...♔e7? 16.♘xe6! fxe6 17.♕g7+ ♔d6 18.♖fd1+ ♔c6 19.♖xd7! ♕xd7 20.♖b6+ ♔xb6 21.♕xd7. White captures later easily the e6-pawn or the f6-pawn and preserves excellent winning chances.

16.♕h3

Now Black can already play:

16...♔e7

and the game ends in a draw to the mutual satisfaction of the opponents.

17.f4 h4 18.♕f3 ♖ac8 19.e5 ♕xc3 20.exf6+ ♔xf6 21.♕xc3 ♖xc3 ½ – ½

157 **D03**

Radjabov – Naiditsch

Round 8 8.08

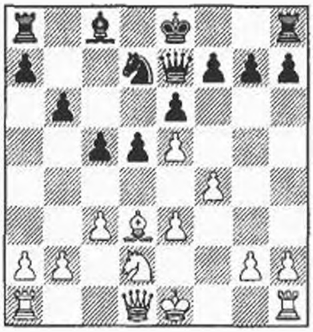
Notes by S. Shipov

The quality of Black's playing in this game was not in harmony with the level of the tournament, mildly speaking...

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 e6 3.♗g5 c5 4.e3 ♗e7 5.♘bd2 d5 6.c3 ♘bd7 7.♗d3 b6 8.♘e5

This is an old attacking scheme that became widely popular after the games between Petrosian and Spassky.

8...♘xe5 9.dxe5 ♘d7 10.♗xe7 ♕xe7 11.f4



11...0–0?

I must tell you that move was played rather quickly. Black castles right under the gun. The players who have some idea about that line usually play here 11...f6 or 11...♗b7.

12.♘f3

This is formally a novelty, but I am sure that has been tested numerous times in games which have not entered any databases yet. It looked also very good for White to play the already familiar line: 12.♕h5 f5 13.g4! and he had a powerful initiative.

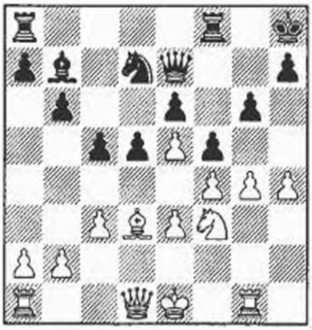
12...f5

This was probably with the naive hope that White was going to exchange on f6 and to free Black's pieces. In case of 12...f6 White had the powerful resource 13.♕c2!.

13.♖g1!

Naturally when the centre is closed White can start an immediate kingside onslaught!

13...♔h8 14.g4 g6 15.h4! ♗b7



16.h5

White wants to tear his opponent's position apart!

16...fxg4 17.♖xg4

White did not need to calculate sharp lines like 17.hxg6 h5, at all. Arkady thought over the position for a long time here and realized the hopelessness of his situation...

17...g5!?

This is an interesting attempt to confuse the opponent. After 17...gxh5 18.♖g5 White can simply increase the pressure without being in a hurry.

18.♘xg5 d4

This looked really energetic, but in fact it was just a psychic attack!

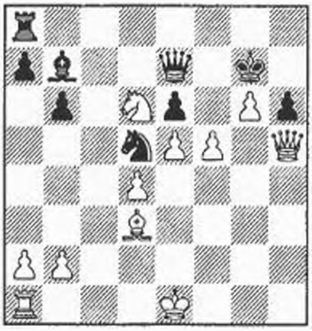
19.exd4 cxd4 20.cxd4!

Teimour just captures all sacrifices and wins convincingly.

20...h6

It was equally useless for Black to resist with 20...♖xf4 21.♖xf4 ♕xg5 22.♕g4!.

21.♘e4 ♖g8 22.♘d6 ♘f6 23.♖g6 ♖xg6 24.hxg6 ♘d5 25.♕h5 ♔g7 26.f5 1–0



The slaughtered here had enough of it, after all. Black resigned. Arcady needs to learn some theory, does he not...

158 **C88**

Anand – Naiditsch

Round 9 9.08

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗a4

♘f6 5.0–0 ♗e7 6.♖e1 b5 7.♗b3 0–0 8.h3

This is the contemporary reaction to Black's attempt to play the Marshall Attack. The idea of the move 8.h3 is that White refrains from playing c3 until Black has the option to push d7-d5 at once, with the idea to preserve for White the possibility to play ♘c3, which improves his chances considerably. The only players recently that stick to the classical Marshall Attack 8.c3 d5, among the world's best are Leko, J.Polgar and Shirov – he has the reputation of an attacker to live up to...

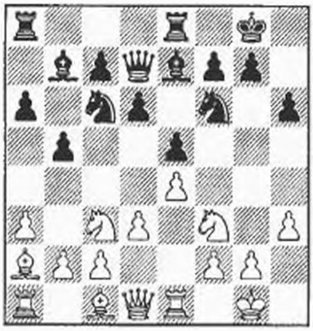
8...♗b7 9.d3 d6 10.a3 h6

The modern opening theory recommends here for Black the moves: 10...♕d7, 10...♘a5 or 10...♘b8.

11.♘c3 ♖e8 12.♗a2

This is a very up-to-the-point move, since the bishop will not be under attack with tempo after an eventual ♘d4.

12...♕d7



13.♗e3

It was worth considering for White here to try 13.♘h2 with the idea to prepare f2-f4, for example, 13...♘d4 14.f4 a5 15.♘f3 ♘xf3+ 16.♕xf3 b4 17.♘e2, White's plan to bring his knight to f5 promises him good prospects on the kingside. Black's attempt to break in the centre backfires after 17...d5 18.fxe5 dxe4 19.♕f2 exd3 20.exf6 ♗xf6 21.cxd3 and the compensation for the sacrificed material is absolutely insufficient, Lanka – Djuric, Adelaide 1990.

13...♘d8 14.♘h2 ♘e6 15.♘g4 c6 16.♖f1 ♘f4 17.♘xf6+ ♗xf6 18.♕f3 ♗g5 19.♘e2 ½ – ½

159 **B30**

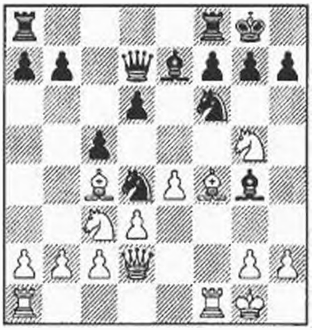
Bologan – Radjabov

Round 9 9.08

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♘c3

V. Bologan does not wish to enter a theoretical dispute in the Sveshnikov variation.

3...e5 4.♗c4 ♗e7 5.d3 d6 6.0–0 ♘f6 7.♘g5 0–0 8.f4 ♗g4 9.♕e1 exf4 10.♗xf4 ♘d4 11.♕d2 ♕d7



12.♗e3!

This seemingly modest retreat of the bishop is much stronger than 12.a4 or 12.h3. The Azerbaijanian GM had already a game against the latter move – 12.h3 ♗h5 13.g4 (13.♔h2 b5 14.♗b3 ♘xb3 15.axb3 b4 16.♘e2 d5 17.e5 ♘e8 18.♘f3 ♘c7= Nikolenko – Neverov, Czestochowa 1992) 13...♗g6 14.♘d5 b5

15.♗b3 ♗d8⇄ and Black had an excellent counterplay in the game Ponomariov – Radjabov, Linares 2003.

The other possibility 12.a4 is also not dangerous for Black. After 12...h6 (it is not so good for Black to play 12...♗h5 13.♖ae1 ♘g4 because after 14.♘d5± as in the game Sedlak – Jovanic, Pula 2003, the white knight occupied a powerful position in the centre) 13.♘f3 ♘xf3+ 14.gxf3 ♗e6 15.♔h1 ♔h7 16.♗b5 ♕d8 17.d4 cxd4 18.♕xd4 (18.♘e2 ♘h5 19.♗g3 ♘xg3+ 20.hxg3 ♗g5= Kramnik – Grischuk, Wijk aan Zee 2003) 18...♘h5 19.♗g3 ♘xg3+ 20.hxg3 ♖c8 21.♗d3 g6∞ and Black's chances were not inferior in the game Kulaots – Moiseenko, Kharkov 2003.

12...h6

After 12...a6 13.♗xd4 (it is maybe better for White to play 13.♘d5 in order to increase the pressure against f7 after 13...♘xd5 14.♗xd5↑) 13...cxd4 14.♘e2 h6 15.♘f3 d5 16.exd5 ♗xf3 17.♖xf3 ♘xd5 18.♘xd4 and the opponents agreed to a draw in the game Nisipeanu – Van Wely, Istanbul 2003, because of the line 18...♗c5 19.c3 ♘xc3 20.bxc3 ♗xd4=.

13.♘f3 ♘xf3+ 14.gxf3 ♗e6 15.♔h1 ♔h7 16.♗xe6 fxe6

Black's wish to control the d5-square once and for all in that position is quite natural, particularly if you had in mind the earlier game Kramnik – Degraeve, Senat 2003 in which after 16...♕xe6 17.♖ae1 ♕h3 18.♕g2 ♕xg2+ 19.♔xg2 a6 20.f4⩲ White had a superior endgame.

17.♕g2 ♖f7

In case of 17...♕e8 it is worth for White to play 18.f4!?, because after 18.♕h3 d5 19.♘e2 ♗d6 20.♖f2 ♕h5= Black solved his opening problems easily in the game Gallagher – San Segundo, Plovdiv 2003.

18.♖g1 ♖af8 19.♘e2!

The white knight is headed for g6 after that strong move.

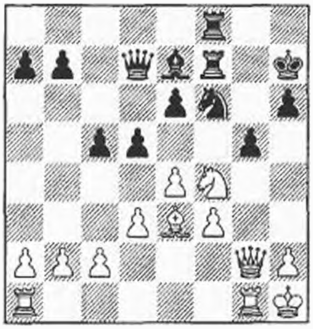
19...d5?

Teimour Radjabov had to comply with the drawbacks of the position after 19...♘e8 20.f4 ♗h4 21.d4±. The move that he played is refuted in an interesting fashion.

20.♘f4!

This is better than 20.e5 ♘e8 (the other retreat of the knight – 20...♘g8 is worse due to 21.♕g6+ ♔h8 22.♘f4 ♗g5 23.♖xg5 ♖xf4 24.♗xf4 hxg5 25.♗xg5±) 21.♕g6+ ♔h8±.

20...g5



21.♘g6!!

This knight-sacrifice is the essence of White's idea, otherwise after 21.♘e2 e5∞ Black has nothing to worry about.

21...♘h5!

Black cannot accept the sacrifice of that Troyan horse. After 21...♔xg6 22.♗xg5! hxg5 (it is not better at all for Black to play 22...♔h7 23.♗xf6 ♗xf6 24.♕g6+ ♔h8 25.♕xh6+ ♖h7 26.♕xf8#) 23.♕xg5+ ♔h7 24.♕h4+ ♘h5 25.♕xh5#

the Black king is subjected to a checkmating attack.

22.♘xf8+ ♖xf8

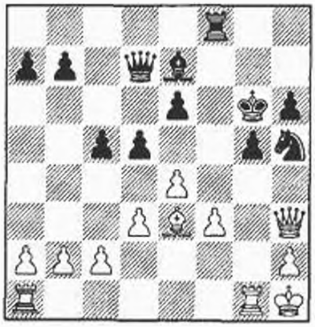
Presently the whole board is divided by the existing pawn chains and White's extra exchange is not effective yet. The moment the position gets opened Black will be in a big trouble.

23.♕h3

Bologan had an opportune moment to open the position with the move 23.f4!. After 23...d4 (Black has no chances to save the game after 23...♘xf4 24.♗xf4 ♖xf4 25.♖af1+–) the Moldavian grandmaster gives the following line: 24.fxg5 (this is more precise than 24.♗d2 ♘xf4 25.♗xf4 ♖xf4 26.e5 ♖f5 27.♕e4 ♕d5 28.♕xd5 exd5 29.♖ae1 ♔g6 30.♖gf1±) 24...dxe3 25.♕h3 ♔g6 26.gxh6+ ♔xh6 27.♕xe3+ ♖f4 28.♖g8→ and Black's defence will be very difficult because his king is bare without its pawn cover, for example Black loses immediately after: 28...♔h7 because of 29.♕g1 ♖f6 30.♕g4 ♗d6 31.♖g5 ♘g7 32.e5+–.

23...♔g6

Black must preserve his knight. It is too bad for him to play 23...♘f4 because of 24.♗xf4 ♖xf4 25.♖g4+–.



24.♖af1?

This is a serious mistake. After the correct 24.♖ae1 d4 25.♗d2 ♗d6 White can play the move 26.e5!+– and prevent the black bishop from coming to the f4-square. There might follow 26...♗e7 27.♖e4 and White will manage to push f3-f4.

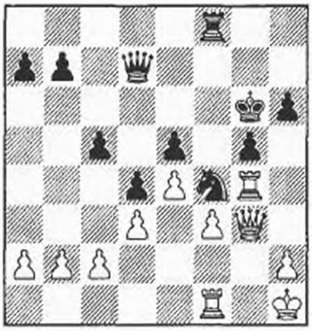
24...d4!

The black knight now succeeds to occupy the all-important f4-outpost.

25.♗d2 ♗d6 26.♖g4?

One mistake is usually followed by another. White would not achieve much after 26.♕g4 ♗f4 27.♗xf4 ♘xf4, but he still had fair winning chances after the line recommended by Bologan: 26.c3! ♗f4 27.♖d1 ♗xd2 28.♖xd2 ♘f4 29.♕f1±.

26...♗f4 27.♗xf4 ♘xf4 28.♕g3 e5=



Black's knight on f4 is extremely powerful and White's extra exchange seems to be immaterial.

29.h4 ♕e6 30.b3

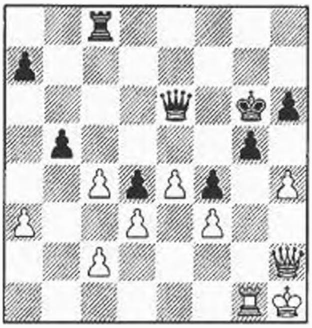
After 30.hxg5?! h5 31.♖h4 ♕xa2↑ it is only White who risks losing the game.

30...b5 31.a3 ♖h8 32.♕h2 ♖f8 33.♕g3 ♖h8 34.♖xf4?!

It was much safer for White to play 34.♖f2=

34...exf4 35.♕h2 c4 36.♖g1 ♖c8

37.bxc4 ½ – ½



The adversaries agreed to a draw in this position that was so abundant with of possibilities for both sides. The analysis of the Moldavian grandmaster showed that White must play very carefully in order to avoid the worst. After 37...bxc4 there might follow 38.hxg5 hxg5 39.♕h4 ♖c5 (39...♕f6 40.♕g4 ♖h8+ 41.♔g2 cxd3 42.cxd3 ♖b8 43.♖c1 ♖b2+ 44.♔f1±) 40.dxc4 ♕f6 41.♕f2 (it is weaker for White to play 41.♖g2, because after 41...♖xc4 42.♕h3 d3! 43.cxd3 ♖c7 44.♔g1 ♖h7 45.♕f5+ ♕xf5 46.exf5+ ♔xf5∓ White must defend a worse rook and pawn endgame, and after 41.♕h2 ♖xc4 42.♖b1 ♖c8 43.♔g1 he must worry about 43...d3∞) 41...♖xc4 42.♖d1∞ a quite complex position with mutual chances lies ahead.

160 **B30**

Leko – Kramnik

Round 9 9.08

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♘c3 e5 4.♗c4 d6 5.d3 ♗e7 6.♘d2

White kept choosing here 6.0–0 much more often in the super-tournaments of 2003, but without any particular achievements. White scored four draws and one defeat in five games altogether.

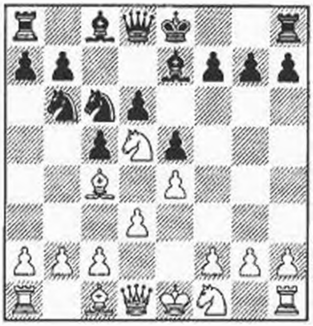
6...♘f6 7.♘f1 ♘d7

The idea of this move belongs to Ivanchuk, who tested it successfully against Anand at the World-Championship in Moscow 2001. The basic theoretical discussions concern mostly the move 7...♗g4.

8.♘d5

Black's task is simpler after that move. White's latest purposeful idea is to play 8.♘e3 immediately.

8...♘b6



9.♘xb6

According to Ivanchuk after 9.♘fe3 ♘xc4 10.♘xc4 ♗e6=, as well as after 9.♘xe7 ♕xe7 10.♗b3 ♘d4= the position is equal.

9...axb6

White preserves some advantage after 9...♕xb6 10.♘e3±.

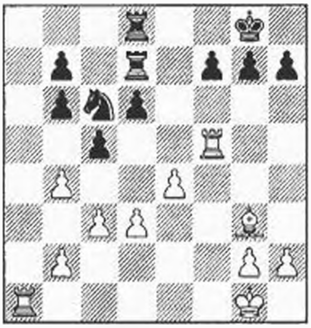
10.c3 0–0 11.♘e3 ♗g5 12.0–0 ♗xe3

After 12...♔h8 13.♗d2 ♗xe3 14.fxe3 ♕e7 15.♗d5 ♗e6 16.♕b3 ♘a5 17.♕c2 Anand – Ivanchuk, Moscow 2001, White was slightly better, but his position was hardly easy to improve.

13.♗xe3 ♕e7 14.f4 exf4 15.♗xf4

The correct evaluation of this position is quite similar to the game Anand – Ivanchuk: White is a bit superior, but this symbolic advantage can be materialized only with the help of the opponent...

15...♗e6 16.♗xe6 ♕xe6 17.♕b3 ♕xb3 18.axb3 ♖ad8 19.♗g3 ♖d7 20.♖f5 ♖fd8 21.b4



21...♘e7 ½ – ½

Black pushes d6-d5 and frees his position after the retreat of the white rook and White's edge disappears completely.

161 **E32**

Kramnik – Bologan

Round 10 10.08

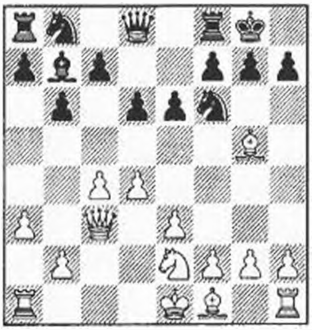
Notes by S. Shipov

The situation before that game was rather intriguing. In case of a win, the champion was not only going to catch up with the unchangeable leader of the tournament up to that moment, but he was also going to snatch the first place away from him according to the tie-break rules. All that did not happen and I felt that to have something to do with the inside logic of chess. Viorel played in Dortmund more enterprisingly and more aggressively than his rivals. He needed and deserved to win more than them!

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.♕c2

This is the Alekhine variation of the Nimzowitsch defence.

4...0–0 5.a3 ♗xc3+ 6.♕xc3 b6 7.♗g5 ♗b7 8.e3 d6 9.♘e2!



That is the last cry of the opening fashion. This order of moves is quickly becoming popular lately mostly due to the efforts of Evgeny Bareev. The white knight is headed for the c3-square.

9...c5N

It might seem strange, but that move is a novelty. Black used to place his knight on d7 unexceptionally. You can see how the fight usually developed by following the games of the Moscow guru of the variation – 9...♘bd7 10.♕d3! (This is the key-move, because the other possibility is not so convincing: 10.♕c2 c5 11.♘c3 cxd4 12.exd4 ♕c7 13.♗d3 ♖ac8 14.0–0 ♗a6 and White's c4-pawn is rather vulnerable, Ivanchuk – Topalov, Linares 1999.) 10...h6 11.♗h4 ♕e7 12.♘c3 c5 13.♖d1 (The sacrifice of the g2-pawn is not so clear after: 13.♗e2 cxd4 14.♕xd4 e5 15.♕d1 ♗xg2 16.♖g1 ♗c6 17.♗g4 g5 18.♗f5 ♖fd8 Bareev – Karpov, Cap d'Agde 2002.) 13...♖fd8 14.♗e2 cxd4 15.♕xd4 ♘c5 16.♗xf6 ♕xf6 17.♕xf6 gxf6 18.♖d4 (White had only a symbolic edge after 18.♘b5 d5 19.cxd5 ♗xd5 20.♘c7 ♗b3 21.♘xa8 ♗xd1 22.♗xd1 ♖xa8 23.♗c2 ♖c8 24.♔d2 in the game Bareev – Karpov, Wijk aan Zee 2003.) 18...♘b3 19.♖h4 ♔g7 20.♔d1 d5 21.♔c2 ♘a5 22.cxd5 ♗xd5 23.♘xd5 ♖xd5 24.♖d1 ♖c8+ and Black succeeded to share the point after a long and strenuous fight in the game, Bareev – Leko, Monaco 2003.

10.dxc5!

This exchange is a typical resource for White in the absence of the knight on d7.

10...dxc5

White will counter 10...bxc5 with the unpleasant 11.♖d1.

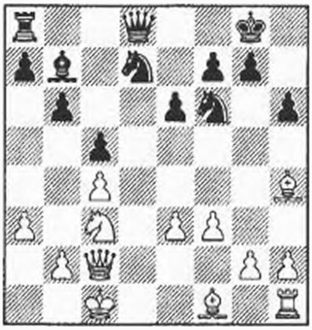
11.♕c2

This move vacates the c3-square for the knight.

11...h6 12.♗h4 ♕e7 13.0–0–0

Black will hardly create any attack on the queenside.

13...♖d8 14.♖xd8+ ♕xd8 15.♘c3 ♘bd7 16.f3

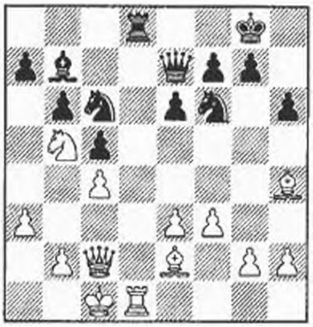


White has a small but stable advantage. His bishop pair might become a telling factor sooner or later. Note the placement of the black pawns on the queenside. White's dark-squared bishop may find juicy objects for attack there after some exchanges. This applies for the distant future, of course. It is important to have in mind that Kramnik is unbelievably strong in positions like that! So Bologan's stubbornness in defence deserves admiration...

16...♘e5 17.♗g3 ♘c6 18.♗e2 ♕e7 19.♗h4 ♘e5 20.♖d1 ♖d8 21.♘b5

This knight is a provocateur! Should Black play a7-a6, his pawn chain will immediately become vulnerable.

21...♘c6



22.♖f1

I am still not quite sure whether White must exchange rooks. I believe it was more practical to play the straightforward: 22.♖xd8+ ♕xd8 23.♕d2, trying to reach a comfortable ending for White.

22...g5

Viorel did not wish to defend passively. He was looking for counterplay by pushing his kingside pawns forward...

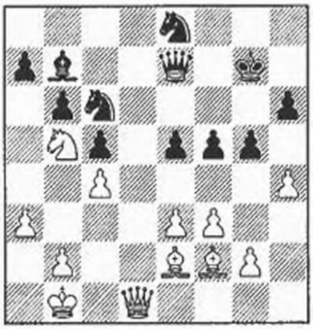
23.♗g3 ♘h5 24.♗f2 ♘g7 25.♖d1

White is now ready to trade rooks! This is quite typical for the contemporary grandmasters. They are tricky, insidious and unpredictable at times...

25...f5 26.♕a4 ♖xd1+ 27.♕xd1 ♘e8

Black must control the d6-square additionally.

28.h4 ♔g7 29.♔b1 e5



Black's pawn chain occupied the 5th rank. Vladimir failed to find an Achilles heel in it.

30.hxg5 hxg5 31.♔a1

This prophylactic was a little bit overdone. The manoeuvre of the white knight to d5 is not dangerous for Black – 31.♘c3 ♘f6 32.♘d5 ♕d6! It looked interesting for White to try 31.♗e1 in order to improve the prospects of the bishop, although it still could not go to c3 outright, because of a7-a6.

31...♗c8!

This is a very purposeful redeployment of the bishop to e6. White's c4-pawn is a real target for an attack.

32.g3 ♗e6 33.f4

This looks like the only way for White to play for a win, but most probably he could have waited for a more opportune moment for that pawn-break.

33...♕d7 34.♕xd7+

White remained with more possibilities to complicate the fight after 34.♕c2.

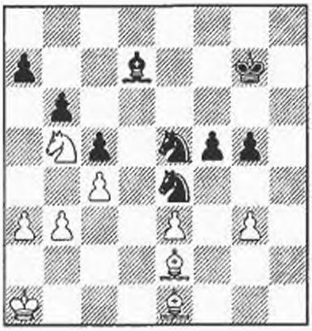
34...♗xd7 35.♗e1

White lacked just a single tempo in order to create great problems for Black. It was not effective for him to play: 35.fxe5 ♘xe5 36.♘xa7 ♘d6 37.b3 ♘e4 38.♗e1 g4!, followed by ♘e5-f3.

35...♘f6!

The weakness of the light squares in White's camp is quite obvious. Meanwhile his king is quite surprisingly too far away from the centre...

36.fxe5 ♘e4 37.b3 ♘xe5!



It becomes clear now that Black has the initiative. After 38.♘xa7 Black plays 38...g4! and the black knight occupies the f3-square. Vladimir understood that it was not worth trying to win anymore and by playing:

38.♘c3 ½ – ½

he offered a draw. Viorel Bologan won the tournament quite deservedly!

162 **B72**

Naiditsch – Leko

Round 10 10.08

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♘c3 g6 4.d4

If White intends to avoid the theoretical battles in the main lines of the Dragon variation he usually chooses presently the moves 4.♗b5 or 4.♗c4.

4...cxd4 5.♘xd4 ♗g7 6.♗e3 ♘f6 7.♗c4 0–0 8.♗b3 d6

There arose by transposition a key theoretical position of the Dragon variation. Najditsch has not dealt with it in his practice yet and Leko has played it only once against 9.f3 as far back as in the year 1992.

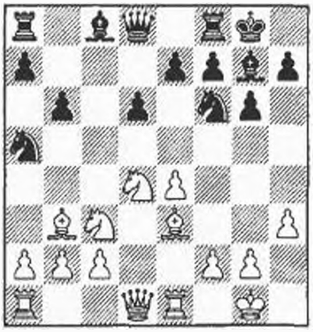
9.h3

The lines starting with 9.f3 are more popular.

9...♘a5

Black plays more often 9...♗d7 followed by ♖c8.

10.0–0 b6 11.♖e1



White plans to continue with ♗g5 and ♘d5, and to try to force the exchange on d5. His rook will be very useful then attacking the backward e7-pawn.

11...♗b7 12.♗g5 ♘xb3

The line 12...h6 13.♗h4 ♘xb3 14. axb3 leads only to a transposition of moves.

13.axb3 h6 14.♗h4 ♕d7 15.f3

The move 15.♕d2 was tested in the game Anand – Kasparov, Linares 2003, but after 15...♘h5 White played 16.f3 anyway, since Black was threatening 16...g5.

15...♖fd8 16.♕d2 e5 17.♗xf6

White simplifies the position quite prudently. After 17.♘de2 g5!? 18.♗g3 d5 Black would have seized the initiative.

17...♗xf6 18.♘db5 ♗g5 19.♕d3 a6 20.♘a3 b5 21.♘d5

This is the best move and White preserves the balance after it. In case of 21.b4 Black could have tried the risky line 21...d5 22.exd5 ♕d6!? and his two bishops would be extremely powerful.

21...♗xd5 22.♕xd5 ♗f4 23.♖e2 ♖ac8

Black's attempt to play for a checkmate with 23...♕e7? fails after: 24. ♘xb5.

24.b4 ♕a7+ ½ – ½

163 **E11**

Radjabov – Anand

Round 10 10.08

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 ♗b4+ 4.♘bd2 b6 5.a3 ♗xd2+ 6.♗xd2 h6 7.♗f4

White usually fights for an opening advantage with the move 7.g3, for example: 7...♗b7 8.♗g2 0–0 9.0–0 d6 10.b4 ♘bd7 11.♗c3 ♘e4 12.♗b2± Solozhenkin – Callergard, Malmoe 2003.

7...♗b7 8.e3

Black now exchanges the dangerous bishop and equalizes quickly.

8...♘h5 9.♗g3 ♘xg3 10.hxg3 d6 11.♕c2 ♘d7 12.♗d3 c5 13.♗e4 ♗xe4 ½ – ½

Essent Crown Group

Hoogeveen 10.10 – 18.10, 18 cat.

			1	2	3	4	
1	Polgar Ju.	2722		1 0	= 1	1 =	4
2	Sokolov I.	2695	0 1		= =	= =	3
3	Aronian	2649	= 0	= =		= 1	3
4	Karpov	2693	0 =	= =	= 0		2

The autumn chess tournament in Hoogeveen has gradually become one of the most popular in Holland. It has been named Essent after its main sponsor and it is usually played in the town hall of Hoogeveen. Another attraction for the spectators were the glass pieces, made in the Glass museum of Hoogeveen. This relatively small round-robin is played in two rounds and it is based on interesting contrasts: man-woman, young-old, Dutch-foreigner. The participants this year included the World Junior Champion Levon Aronian; I.Sokolov was playing under the national flag of Holland; Karpov was the oldest participant; and Judit Polgar represented the better part of mankind.

Karpov played against Polgar in the first round and suddenly overlooked the well known typical combination with the bishop sacrifice on h7. Judit continued to play quite convincingly later on too: she quickly won a pawn with Black in her second round game against Aronian and he only managed to save the game after extraordinarily stubborn defence. Polgar outplayed Sokolov in the third round and it looked like the top place was already secured for her with 2.5 out of 3 in such a short tournament. Nevertheless it was not over yet, and she lost to Sokolov in round 5 while Aronian beat Karpov to catch up with her. Polgar obtained a slight edge with White in the decisive game of the sixth round against Aronian and pressed her advantage home with ease after a blunder by Aronian.

164 **C42**

Ju.Polgar – Karpov

Round 1 12.10

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘f6 3.♘xe5 d6 4.♘f3 ♘xe4 5.d4 d5 6.♗d3 ♗e7 7.0–0 ♘c6 8.c4

White must play very energetically in this position in order to get the advantage. He must try to exploit the fact that the black knight on e4 is rather unstable. The appearance of an isolated d4-pawn should not dissuade White, since he has free development of his pieces and an advantage in the centre and on the kingside as a compensation for its weakness.

8...♘b4 9.♗e2

White should naturally avoid the trade of that bishop in his fight for an opening edge.

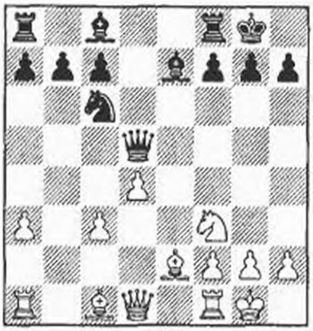
9...0–0

Black's other main alternative here is the move 9...dxc4.

10.a3

This move focuses the theoretical discussions presently and Judit Polgar plays often like that too. She had another game with Karpov at the end of the year 2003: 10.♘c3 ♗f5 11.a3 ♘xc3 12.bxc3 ♘c6 13.♖e1 ♖e8 14.c5 (⌓14.cxd5 ♕xd5 15.♗f4+) 14...♘a5 15.♘e5 ♗f6 16.♗f4 ♗xe5 17.♗xe5 ♕d7 18.♗f1 f6 19.♗f4 ♖xe1 20.♕xe1 ♖e8 21.♕d1 b6= Ju.Polgar – Karpov, Cap d'Agde 2003.

10...♘c6 11.cxd5 ♕xd5 12.♘c3 ♘xc3 13.bxc3



13...♕d6

This is Karpov's new idea. He does not wish to let the white bishop to f4. Black usually played here 13...♗f5 and White followed that with 14.♗f4 or 14.c4.

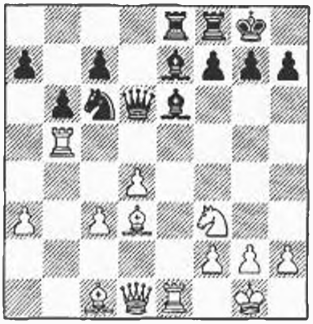
14.♖b1

The rook is quick to occupy the b-file.

14...b6 15.♖e1 ♗e6

In case of 15...♗f5 with the idea to exchange a couple of bishops after 16.♗d3, White would have probably countered with 16.♖b5 just like in the game.

16.♗d3 ♖ae8 17.♖b5



17...♘a5

Black was probably afraid of the tactical strike 18.d5 and probably in vain, for example: 18...a6 19.dxe6 axb5 20.♗xb5 ♕xd1 (20...♖d8 21.♕xd6 ♖xd6 22.♗f4 ♖xe6 23.♗xc6) 21.♖xd1 ♖d8 22.♖e1 ♘a5 and White's compensation for the exchange would have been hardly sufficient.

18.♖be5

White takes advantage of the chance to double the rooks along the e-file immediately.

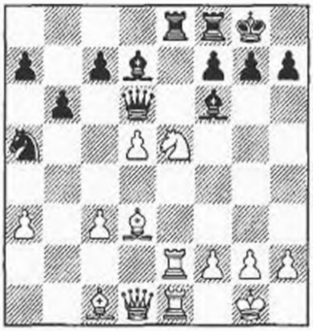
18...♘c6 19.♖5e2

It is now evident that Karpov's novelty was not quite satisfactory. White has a powerful positional pressure.

19...♗d7 20.d5 ♘a5

Of course the pawn 20...♕xd5?? is untouchable because of 21.♗xh7+.

21.♘e5 ♗f6

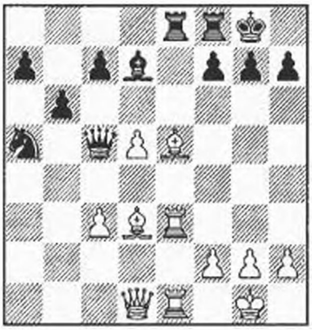


22.♗f4

White sacrifices a pawn and obtains an overwhelming attack as a result. Instead the simple line: 22.♘xd7 ♕xd7 23.♗f5! ♕d8 24.♕d3± was also leading to a clear edge for White.

22...♗xe5 23.♗xe5 ♕xa3 24.♖e3 ♕c5

It is hardly believable that Karpov did not know the famous combination that Em.Lasker did for the first time in Amsterdam in the year 1889 against Bauer. Maybe he did not bother to concentrate, or he was in a time-trouble. Of course, Black had to play either 24...g6 or 24...f6. Naturally Black's position after each of these moves would have remained difficult, so maybe Karpov decided to save some energy for the next round...



25.♗xh7+! ♔xh7 26.♕h5+ 1–0

26...♔g8 27.♗xg7!+–.

165 D39

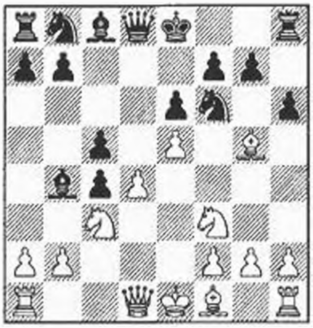
I.Sokolov – Aronian

Round 12.10

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 d5 4.♘c3 dxc4 5.e4 ♗b4 6.♗g5 c5 7.e5

White plays more often here 7.♗xc4.

7...h6



8.♗d2!?

White does not achieve any advantage after 8.exf6 hxg5 9.fxg7 ♖g8 10.dxc5 ♕xd1+.

8...♗xc3 9.bxc3

Or 9.♗xc3 ♘e4∞ with an unclear position.

9...♘e4

It is worse for Black to play 9...♘d5?! 10.♗xc4 cxd4 11.cxd4± and White has excellent attacking prospects against Black's future castling position.

10.♗xc4 ♗d7

Black plans to place his bishop on c6. The moves 10...♘c6 and 10...0–0 are definitely more popular.

11.d5 0–0

Black should not capture on d5 before castling since after: 11...exd5 12.♗xd5 ♗c6 13.♗xe4 ♗xe4 14.♕a4+ ♗c6 15.♕g4↑, he has problems with the sheltering of his king.

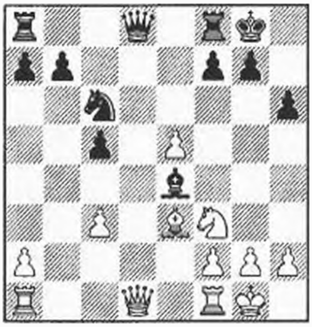
12.0–0

White achieves nothing much after 12.dxe6 ♗xe6 13.♗xe6 fxe6 and Black is not worse at all.

12...exd5 13.♗xd5 ♗c6 14.♗xe4 ♗xe4 15.♗e3 ♘c6

Or 15...♕xd1?! 16.♖fxd1 b6 17.♖d6± Shchekachev – Piket, Amsterdam

2001; 15...♘d7!?.



16.♘d2

White fails to win a pawn after: 16.♗xc5 because of 16...♕xd1 17.♖fxd1 ♖fe8 18.♘d2 ♖xe5 19.♘xe4 ♖xe4 20.♖d7 b6 and he should play very carefully not to become worse.

16...♗d3 17.♖e1 ♘xe5

Black forces exchanges leading to simplification and a draw. He could have tried to preserve more complex positions with moves like 17...b6 or 17...c4.

18.♗xc5 ♖e8 19.♘f3 ♕d5 20.♖xe5 ♖xe5 ½ – ½

166 **E32**

Aronian – Ju.Polgar

Round 2 13.10

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.♕c2 0–0 5.a3 ♗xc3+ 6.♕xc3

Black allowed the opponent to achieve one of the main ideas of the 4.♕c2 variation – to obtain the bishop pair advantage without compromising his pawn structure. On the other hand White fell behind in development and the placement of his queen might turn out to be unfavourable in case of the opening of the c-file. In general Black has plenty of counterchances in this line.

6...b6 7.♗g5 ♗b7 8.f3

White can also play here 8.e3 followed by ♘e2.

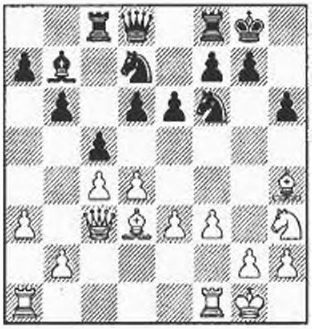
8...d6

The other main line is – 8...h6 9.♗h4 d5 10.e3 ♘bd7 11.cxd5 ♘xd5 12.♗xd8 ♘xc3 13.♗h4 ♘d5 14.♗f2. It is understandable that not everybody is happy to defend that endgame for Black. It is a bit worse indeed, but still perfectly defendable. Black now complies with White playing e4, but that creates complex middlegame positions with mutual chances.

9.♘h3

9.e4 leads to a complicated position with good counterchances for Black after: 9...c5 (but not 9...♘xe4 10.♗xd8 ♘xc3 11.♗xc7 ♘a4 12.b3, because Black loses the knight) 10.d5 (or 10.dxc5 bxc5, followed by e6-e5 and ♘c6-d4) 10...♘bd7 11.♘h3 h6 12.♗f4 exd5 13.cxd5 ♕e7, and White will have to castle long, which leads to a double-edged game.

9...h6 10.♗h4 ♘bd7 11.e3 ♖c8 12.♗d3 c5 13.0–0



13...♗a6

This novelty is quite logical – Black

increases the pressure against the c4-pawn. In the game Petursson – Salov, Manila 1990, Black obtained an excellent game after 13...cxd4 14.♕xd4 ♕e7 15.♗e2 e5 16.♕d2 g5 17.♗g3 ♘c5↑. Black's pieces and pawns are active and White's bishop pair advantage is not a telling factor.

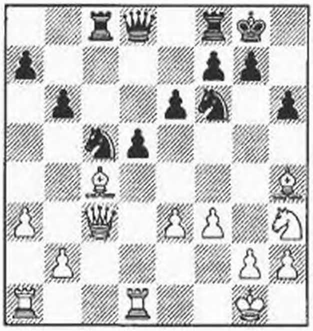
14.dxc5?!

This is a very dubious move. White had better protect the c4-pawn with 14.♖ac1 or 14.b3. He in fact facilitates enemy's counterplay against the c4-pawn with the move in the game.

14...♘xc5 15.♗e2 d5 16.♖fd1

After the exchanges 16.♗xf6 ♕xf6 17.♕xf6 gxf6, White loses the c4-pawn because of the pin.

16...♗xc4 17.♗xc4



17...♘cd7!

Now, suddenly it turns out that White must be very careful in order to preserve the material equality. So, his move 14 (in answer to Black's novelty) was quite unsatisfactory and White not only lost his edge but became even worse.

18.b3 b5 19.♗xf6 ♘xf6 20.♕d4 bxc4 21.bxc4 ♕a5

Black is also better after 21...♖xc4 22.♕xa7 ♕a8 23.♕xa8 ♖xa8 24.♖db1 ♘d7 with the idea to follow with ♖ca4 and ♘b6-c4.

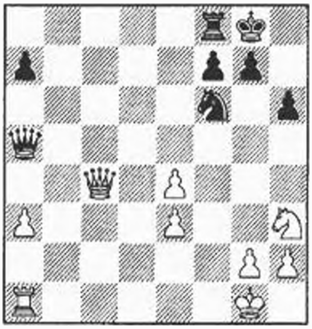
22.♖dc1

After 22.cxd5 ♘xd5 Black is clearly better mostly because of the difference in the placement of the knights on d5 and h3 and the vulnerability of White's queenside. Despite all, Aronian loses a pawn by force after his move in the game while in this line following for example 23.♔h1; he still preserves the material equality.

22...dxc4 23.♖xc4 e5!

This move in connection with the next one was obviously underestimated by White.

24.♕d3 e4 25.fxe4 ♖xc4 26.♕xc4



26...♘g4!

White's pawn structure is in ruins and he should also think about the threat ♕e5. Since there is no suitable defence in sight White will soon lose both his e-pawns.

27.♘f4 ♘xe3 28.♕e2

It is too bad for White to play 28.♕d3 ♕c5 29.♔h1 ♘g4−+, and there is no defence against the knight-fork because 30.♘h3 loses due to 30...♕e5.

28...♕c5 29.♔h1 ♖e8

White now loses the e4-pawn as well.

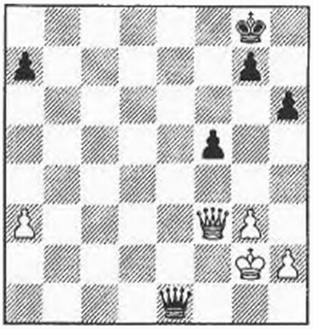
30.♕f3 ♕d4 31.♖e1 ♖xe4

Black evidently wins a pawn. The real problem to solve was which pieces to keep in order to materialize the advantage and Judit failed to solve it correctly. It was worth considering 31...♘c2!?, in order to exchange queens on e4 and to try to win the endgame with a rook and knight against a rook and knight with an extra pawn...

32.g3 ♕d2

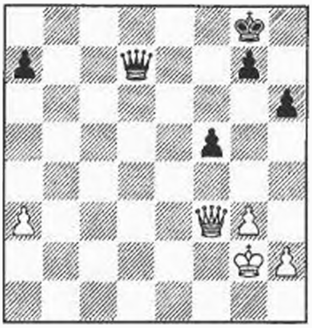
This was again not the best. Black had to preserve the knights: 32...♘g4 33.♖xe4 ♘f2+ 34.♔g2 ♘xe4, in order to exploit the fact that the white king is much more exposed than its counterpart. The idea to play a queen and pawn endgame at the end is definitely the worst possible solution.

33.♘g2 f5 34.♖xe3 ♕c1+ 35.♖e1 ♖xe1+ 36.♘xe1 ♕xe1+ 37.♔g2



So, there arose a queen and pawn endgame with an extra pawn for Black. Generally speaking the stronger side has the following plans at his disposal in order to try to win: 1. To create a passed pawn, to shelter the king from checks and to promote the pawn. This is the calmer scheme and probably the ideal one except that it would hardly work in this position. It is quite unclear how Black can create a passed pawn since moves like g7-g5 and f5-f4 would expose the king too much and it would become impossible to avoid the perpetual. 2. To protect all pawns with the queen (that means to place all of them in such a way that the queen must defend only one pawn on each side of the board) and then to come with the king forward to the enemy camp (in our case to White's queenside) and win material there and then to promote the passed pawn. This plan is much more complex than the first one, because Black must manage to defend the pawns, to find a way forward for the king and to avoid the perpetual. It was nevertheless the right one, because Black in fact had no alternative.

37...♕d2+ 38.♔h3 ♕d7 39.♔g2



39...♔h7

Black is trying not to push any pawns on the kingside. We already know that White managed to defend successfully against that and it is worth recommending 39...g5, in order to preserve the possibility to create a passed pawn there at some moment.

40.h4 a5 41.h5

Now one white pawn on h5 stops two black pawns – g7 and h6.

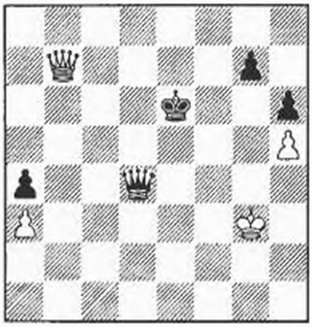
41...a4 42.♔h3 ♕f7 43.♕e2 ♕b7 44.♔h2 ♕c6 45.♕d3 ♕e4 46.♕b5 f4

This is with the idea to reduce the number of the pawns to defend with Black and to expose the white king.

47.gxf4 ♕xf4+ 48.♔h3 ♕e4 49.♕c5 ♕e6+ 50.♔g3 ♔g8 51.♕a5 ♕e3+ 52.♔g4 ♕d4+

In case of 52...♕xa3 Black cannot defend against the perpetual without giving back the a4-pawn: 53.♕d5+ ♔f8 54.♕f5+ ♔e7 55.♕e5+ ♔d8 56.♕d5+ ♔c8 (56...♔c7 57.♕f7+ ♔c6 58.♕e8+) 57.♕c6=.

53.♔g3 ♕d3+ 54.♔h4 ♕c4+ 55.♔g3 ♕d4 56.♕a8+ ♔f7 57.♕b7+ ♔e6



58.♕c8+

This is the right square to check from.

58...♔e7

After 58...♔d5 59.♕a8+ does not let the black king to the queenside

59.♕c7+ ♕d7 60.♕e5+

Now it becomes clear that the black king cannot pass and Black must give back the a4-pawn in order to prevent the perpetual. Black still continued for a while to test the opponent (White had to play precisely), but after some moves that did not change the position much a draw was agreed to.

60...♔f8 61.♕f4+ ♔g8 62.♕b8+ ♔f7

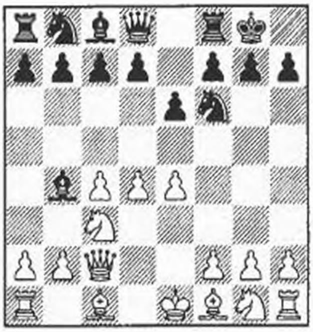
Or 62...♔h7 63.♕b1=.

63.♕f4+ ♔e8 64.♕e4+ ♔d8 65.♕a8+ ♔e7 66.♕e4+ ♔f6 67.♕f4+ ♔e7 68.♕e4+ ♔f8 69.♕f4+ ♔e8 ½ – ½

167 E32

I.Sokolov – Karpov
Round 2 13.10

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.♕c2 0–0 5.e4



5...d6

Karpov chooses a very difficult line from the strategical point of view. Black surrenders the centre to the opponent and postpones the active actions avoiding the pawn-break d7-d5. White's hands are free for a kingside offense as a result and that all spells danger for Black.

6.a3 ♗xc3+ 7.bxc3 e5 8.♗d3 ♘c6 9.♘e2 b6 10.0–0 ♗a6

The attack against the c4-pawn (♗a6, ♘a5, and if necessary – c5, followed by ♖c8 or ♕c8) – is Black's only possible counterplay in this position.

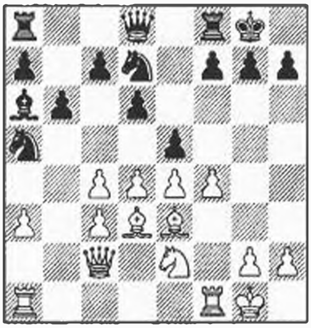
11.f4

White creates the threat to exchange pawns on e5 and to pin the knight on f6 with ♗g5.

11...♘d7

11...exf4 12.♗xf4 is unfavourable for Black, because he must strive to keep the position closed if possible.

12.♗e3 ♘a5



13.c5

This is a key-resource for White. As a rule it is not good for him to protect the c4-pawn in this line: in case of 13.♕a4?! Black plays 13...c5 – so White only isolates his pieces away from the kingside and he would not manage to defend the pawn anyway. Therefore he uses the opportune moment to exchange it.

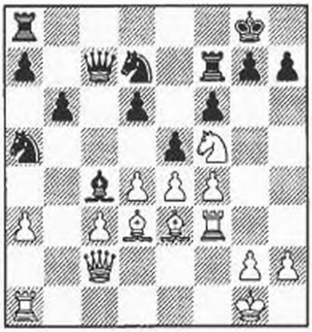
13...♗c4

Black fails to equalize after exchanging on c5 too: 13...♗xd3 14.♕xd3 exd4 (it is a disaster for Black to play 14...bxc5 15.dxe5, and after 15...dxe5 16.♖ad1 ♘f6 17.♕a6+– he loses his knight) 15.cxd4 bxc5 16.dxc5 ♘xc5 17.♗xc5 dxc5 18.♕c3 c6 19.♖ab1↑ – because White will easily regain his pawn and the placement of the black knight is desperate. It is possible that the best for Black is 15...dxc5 16.d5 (but not 16.dxc5 ♘xc5 17.♕xd8 ♖fxd8 18.♗xc5 bxc5, and only Black could play for a win in that endgame Sarkar – Browne, Seattle 2003) 16...c6 17.d6 ♕e8 18.♘g3↑ – and Black's prospects are worse despite the extra pawn, since White's pawns are too powerful and his future kingside attack might become very dangerous, Ivanisevic – Lekic, Budva 2003.

14.cxd6 cxd6 15.♘g3 ♕c7 16.♘f5 f6

Karpov played here long ago against Short: 16...♔h8 17.♖f3 ♖ac8 18.♖af1 f6 (Black should not play 18...♗xd3 19.♕xd3 ♕xc3, because after 20.♕xc3 ♖xc3 21.fxe5 dxe5 22.♗h6! ♖xf3 23.♗xg7+ ♔g8 24.♖xf3+– White wins) 19.♗f2 b5 20.♗g3 a6 21.h4 ♗f7 (Black is trying to prevent the appearance of the white pawn on h5) 22.♗e1 ♘b6 (it was better to play 22...♘c4, preserving the knight on d7 for the defence of the king – that would become quite important later) 23.♕f2 ♘ac4 24.♖g3 g6 25.♘h6 ♗e6 26.f5 gxf5 27.♘xf5 ♖g8 28.♘xd6+–, and White won Short – Karpov, Dortmund 1997.

17.♖f3 ♖f7



Karpov complies with the advance of the white pawn to h5 in this game and his position becomes quite precarious because of that. I got the impression that Black's chances then were definitely not better than in the game

Short – Karpov, so I did not quite understand why the 12th world-champion chose that line in the first place.

18.♖af1 ♔h8 19.h4 ♖c8 20.h5 ♗e6

Black's attempt to create some counterplay with: 20...d5 21.♗xc4 ♘xc4 22.exd5 ♘xa3 23.♕d3 fails because now it is too bad to play 23...♕xc3 24.♕xc3 ♖xc3 25.dxe5 fxe5 26.♘d6± – and Black cannot capture with the knight, because of the weakness of the 8th rank and the march forward of White's d and e-pawns is absolutely victorious.

21.♗a6

This move protects indirectly the c3-pawn now and in the future and so Black's counterplay disappears.

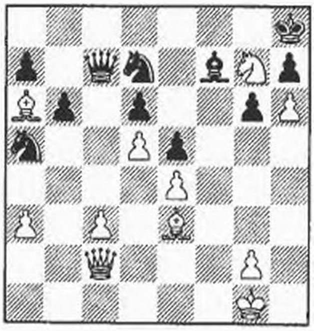
21...♖cf8

The capturing of the pawn 21...♕xc3 loses after 22.♕xc3 ♖xc3 23.♘xd6 ♖c7 24.fxe5 fxe5 25.♗g5 and White wins material.

22.fxe5 fxe5 23.h6 g6

Black's position after 23...♗xf5 24.hxg7+ ♔xg7 25.exf5 is really dangerous for him strategically. His king is too exposed and White's bishop pair is very powerful.

24.♘g7 ♗c4 25.♖xf7 ♖xf7 26.♖xf7 ♗xf7 27.d5



Black's king is very weak and that makes his position hard to defend. White has plenty of possibilities to penetrate – the squares f6, e6 and even sometime in the future the c8-square. Black can hardly manage to protect everything, so he should chose as usual the least of evils. He managed to defend that time, but most probably due to the time-trouble, otherwise White's mistakes were almost impossible to explain. In short Black saved the game only bypassing the loss.

27...♕d8

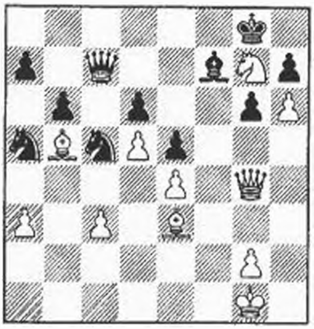
The black queen will have to go back to c7 after its manoeuvre to e7, because it must protect the c8-square in order to prevent the penetration of the white queen. The immediate 27...♔g8 would not work because of 28.♘e6 ♗xe6 (Black is also in a big trouble after 28...♕b8 29.♕f2 ♕e8 30.♕h4 – he is pinned all over the board (White is threatening ♗b5, and the knight cannot retreat away from d7 because of ♕f6), and if 30...♗xe6 31.dxe6 ♕xe6, then 32.♕d8+ ♘f8 33.♗b5 – and White is threatening to play 34.♕c7 ♕f7 35.♕xd6, and 33...♘b3 fails because of 34.♕c7 winning the queen) 29.dxe6 ♘c5 30.♕a2 ♕e7 31.♗xc5 bxc5 32.♕d5 with decisive threats – ♕a8 as well as ♕xh7.

28.♕f2 ♕e7 29.♗b5 ♘c5 30.♕f3 ♔g8 31.♕g4 ♕c7

(diagram)

32.♕h4

White was practically winning by force after 32.♘e6! ♗xe6 33.dxe6 ♕e7 34.♗d7 ♘xd7 35.exd7 ♘c6 36.♗g5+–, and he was capturing a piece for the passed d-pawn. The retreats of the black queen would not save Black either: 32...♕e7 (or 32...♕c8 33.♗xc5



bxc5 34.♕g5 ♗xe6 35.dxe6 ♕xe6 36.♕d8+ ♔f7 37.♕xa5+–, and White wins a knight) 33.♘xc5 bxc5 (33...dxc5 34.♕c8+ ♕f8 35.♕c7+–) 34.♕c8+ ♕f8 35.♕c7 ♘b3 36.♗g5+– – and Black loses his key d6-pawn.

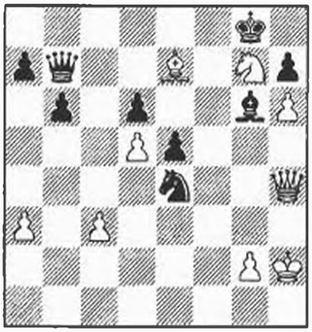
32...♘ab7 33.♗c6 ♕c8 34.♔h2 ♕d8 35.♗g5 ♕c8 36.♗e7 g5

This is a quite unexpected counterstrike in the time-trouble. Black manages to defend the f6-square with his knight and captures White's e4-pawn.

37.♗xg5 ♗g6 38.♗e7

White here again overlooks the best move 38.♗e3, which protects the e4-pawn indirectly, since after 38...♘xe4 he wins with 39.♗xb7 ♕xb7 40.♕d8+ ♔f7 41.♕e8+ ♔f6 42.♕e6#. Thus White would have remained with an extra pawn after 38.Be3 and excellent winning chances.

38...♘xe4 39.♗xb7 ♕xb7



40.c4?!

This is White's last move before the time-control and it misses the last chance to win the game. It is possible that White noticed too late that after 40.♗xd6 Black would play 40...♘xd6 41.♕d8+ ♔f7 42.♕xd6 ♕e7, and White would have to exchange the queens in order to avoid the perpetual check. Still after 43.♕xe7+ (it is weaker to play 43.♕e6+ ♕xe6 44.dxe6+ ♔f6 45.c4 – or 45.g4 b5, and it is far from clear how White can penetrate – 45...♗d3 46.g4 ♗xc4 47.g5+ ♔xg5 48.e7 ♗f7 49.e8♕ ♗xe8 50.♘xe8 and Black manages to save the game: 50...♔xh6 51.♘d6 ♔g5 52.♔g3 ♔f6 53.♘c8 ♔e6 54.♘xa7 ♔d5. Black will capture the a3-pawn, because the white king cannot go too far away from the passed h7-pawn.) 43...♔xe7 44.g4 White preserves his winning chances, because the black king must take care of both the passed d-pawn and the potential passed h-pawn, for example: 44...♔d6 45.c4 b5 (45...♗d3 46.g5, and Black cannot capture on c4, because of g5-g6) 46.cxb5 ♔xd5 47.♘f5, and in view of White's threats ♘e7 and g5-g6 Black cannot take the b5-pawn.

40...♕c7

White's bishop is now stranded on e7 and White does not have any advantage whatsoever.

41.♘e6 ♕d7 42.♗f8 ♔f7

Black's powerful knight on e4 balances the prospects.

43.♗g7 ♔e8 44.♕g4 ♕f7

Black is now threatening to play ♗f5.

45.♕h4 ♕e7 46.♕g4 ½ – ½

Karpov showed his consistency and

his usual stubbornness in defence and managed to save a really difficult position.

168 D39

Karpov – Aronian

Round 3 14.10

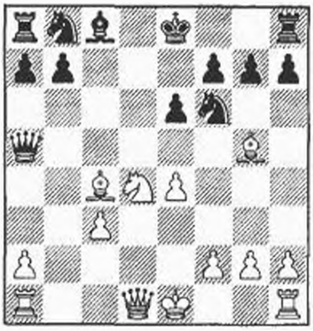
1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 d5 4.♘c3 dxc4 5.e4 ♗b4

The Vienna variation is one of the sharpest lines of the Queen's Gambit. Black is striving for an intense and sharp concrete battle with double-edged chances. He has serious problems with his king, because of his early activity, though...

6.♗g5 c5 7.♗xc4

The other principled line for White – 7.e5 cxd4 8.♕a4+ ♘c6 9.0–0–0 ♗d7 10.♘e4 ♗e7 11.exf6 gxf6 leads to really complex and unclear positions.

7...cxd4 8.♘xd4 ♗xc3+ 9.bxc3 ♕a5



10.♘b5

White's main line presently is – 10.♗b5+ (so that the bishop does not hang after the check on c3) 10...♘bd7 11.♗xf6 ♕xc3+ 12.♔f1 gxf6 13.h4, and he has a good compensation for the pawn, because Black's kingside has been weakened and White has certain threats along the open files on the queenside. The move played by Karpov (introduced at the top-level by himself in his match against J.Timman in 1993) is considered to be not so dangerous for Black by the contemporary theory. This game failed to put that evaluation in doubt either.

10...♘xe4

Black should better capture that central pawn if he can, particularly since there has not been found any refutation yet.

11.♗f4

We know since the match that we mentioned that White has nothing after: 11.♕d4 0–0! 12.♕xe4 a6 13.♗e7 axb5 14.♗b4 ♕c7 15.♗xb5 ♗d7∞ Karpov – Timman, Amsterdam (m/8) 1993.

11...0–0 12.0–0 ♗d7

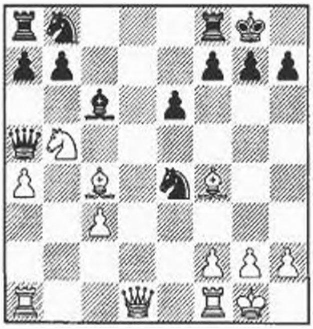
Black can choose in that moment between the move in the game and: 12...♘d7 13.♖e1 (it is not good for White to play 13.♘c7 e5 14.♘xa8 exf4 15.♗d5 ♘ef6!, and the knight is trapped on a8) 13...♘df6 14.a4 b6 15.f3 ♘c5 16.♗e5=∞ – and White has a good compensation for the pawn, because of the unfavourable position of the black queen on a5, Karpov – Piket, Monaco 1999.

13.a4

Karpov's previous coach V.Epishin tested a similar idea, like the one tested by Karpov in this game, but in a different move order i.e. – 13.♗c7 b6 14.a4 a6 15.♖a2 axb5 16.axb5 ♕xc3 17.♖xa8 ♕xc4+ but he was clearly worse in the game Epishin – Richter, Nova Gorica

2000, since he loses material, because he cannot capture the b8-knight. After the other possibility: 13.♘c7 e5 14.♘xa8 exf4 15.♕d5 ♘c5 White's knight on a8 would fail to join the rest of the forces without some concessions.

13...♗c6



14.♗c7N

This novelty (with the idea to isolate the black queen on a5) is not very impressive really! Karpov played before in the same position 14.♕g4 (threatening ♗h6) 14...♘f6 15.♕e2 a6 (or 15...♘bd7 16.♗c7 b6 17.♗d6=∞) 16.♘c7 ♖a7 17.♕e3! b6 18.♘xe6! ♘d5 19.♕g3 fxe6 20.♗xb8 ♖af7 21.♗d6±, and he was slightly better, because of the bishop pair, Karpov – Lautier, Biel 1997. White has tried in practice also: 14.f3 ♗xb5 15.axb5 ♕b6+ 16.♕d4 ♕xd4+ 17.cxd4 ♘f6 18.♖fc1 – and his compensation was again sufficient, but hardly good enough to play for a win in the game Nikolic – Gelfand, Monaco 1999.

14...b6 15.♗d6

The actions are forced after that move and Black manages to get out of the water dry and safe. Meanwhile Black was threatening a7-a6 and the move 15.♕g4 was not forcing the retreat of the knight, because White did not have the threat ♗h6.

15...♘xd6 16.♕xd6 a6

Black has calculated everything correctly.

17.♘c7 ♕g5

17...♖a7 18.♘xe6 fxe6 19.♗xe6+ ♖af7 would not have been favourable for Black, because White would have an almost sufficient material compensation.

18.♕g3 ♕xg3 19.fxg3

This is a typical resource – the white rook becomes active along the f-file.

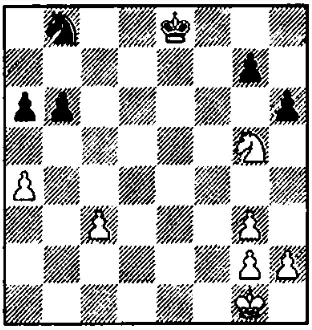
19...♖a7 20.♘xe6 ♖c8

It is not so good for Black to play 20...♖e8 21.♘g5 ♖f8 (otherwise he cannot defend the f7-pawn) 22.♘xf7 ♖axf7 23.♖ae1 and White wins. Black is defending successfully after the move in the game.

21.♘g5 ♗e8

White's pawn structure is clearly worse and his bishop on c4 is hanging, so he had nothing better than:

22.♖ae1 h6 23.♖xe8+ ♖xe8 24.♖xf7 ♖xf7 25.♗xf7+ ♔f8 26.♗xe8 ♔xe8



Finally, as a result of the forced game up to now, there arose an endgame in which White has formally an extra pawn, but that is almost immaterial. This g3-pawn is doubled and his queenside pawn chain is broken. It is not difficult for Black to draw.

27.♘e6 ♔f7 28.♘c7 a5 29.♔f2 ♘d7

White cannot defend his a4-pawn now.

30.♔e3 ♘c5 31.♔d4 ♘xa4 32.♘d5 b5

This is forcing the trade of all the pawns on the queenside.

33.♘c7 b4 34.cxb4 axb4 35.♔c4 ♘c3 36.♔xb4 ♘e4 37.♘b5 ♘d2!

Black now exchanges his knight for all white pawns on the kingside with the help of that manoeuvre.

38.♘d4 ♘f1 39.♘f3 ♔f6 40.♔c4 ♔f5 41.♔d3 ♔g4 ½ – ½

The adversaries agreed to a draw, because of the variation 42.♔e2 ♘xh2 43.♘xh2+ ♔xg3=.

169 **C92**

Ju.Polgar – I.Sokolov

Round 3 14.10

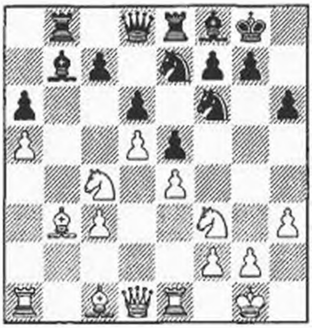
Notes by D. Yevseev

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗a4 ♘f6 5.0–0 ♗e7 6.♖e1 b5 7.♗b3 d6 8.c3 0–0 9.h3 ♗b7 10.d4 ♖e8 11.♘bd2 ♗f8 12.a4 h6 13.♗c2 b4

This move is not played frequently. Black's most popular defence here is 13...exd4 14.cxd4 ♘b4, and he also plays often 13...♕d7.

14.a5 ♖b8 15.♗a4 ♖e7 16.♗b3 ♖e8 17.d5 ♘e7 18.♘c4 bxc3 19.bxc3

(diagram)



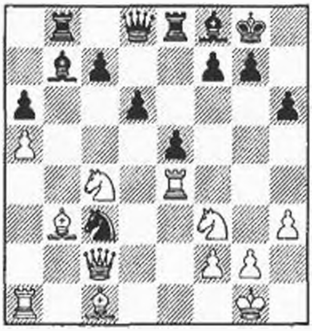
This position is quite typical for the classical systems of the Ruy Lopez (I mean Chigorin, Zaitsev and Breyer systems) and White has some space advantage.

19...♘xe4!?

Black decides to sacrifice a piece for three pawns on order to activate his pieces. This solution was quite deliberate because Black did not like to defend that position after a calmer development. Black's difficulties in slow, manoeuvring games are notorious in this opening, for example 19...♘g6 20.♗a4± or 19...♘d7 20.♗a4!±. Black could have also tried to undermine White's centre immediately with 19...c6!?. That might lead to interesting complications after: 20.♗a3!? (20.dxc6 ♘xc6 21.♗e3!± and the dominance over the important b6 and d5 squares secures a stable advantage for White) 20...♘g6! – strangely enough Black must defend the e5 square and not the d6-square! (It is not good for Black to play 20...♘c8? 21.dxc6 ♗xc6 22.♘cxe5! ♖xb3? 23.♘xc6+−; 22...dxe5 23.♗xf7+! ♔xf7? 24.♘xe5+ ♔g8 25.♕xd8 ♖xd8 26.♘xc6+−; 23...♔h7 24.♗xe8 ♕xe8 25.♗xf8 ♕xf8 26.♘xe5 ♗xe4 27.♕d4±) 21.♗xd6!. This is an elegant tactical strike. (After the intermediate 21.dxc6 ♗xc6 the same tactics is definitely weaker – 22.♗xd6? due to 22...♖xb3! 23.♕xb3 ♗xd6 24.♖ad1

♕b8!∓; 24.♕b6 ♕xb6 25.axb6 ♗c5∓) 21...cxd5! (21...♗xd6? 22.dxc6± ♗xc6 23.♘xd6 ♖xb3? 24.♘xe8+–) 22.♗xb8 dxc4 23.♗xc4 ♕xb8 (23...♕xd1? 24.♖exd1 ♖xb8 25.♖ab1 ♖c8, otherwise Black will remain tied up all over the board 26.♗xf7+ ♔xf7 27.♖xb7+ ♔g8 28.♖b6±; 27...♗e7 28.♖d6!± and White's advantage will be beyond any doubt after he wins the a6-pawn) 24.♗xf7+! ♔xf7 25.♕b3+ ♗d5! (25...♖e6 26.♖ab1±) 26.♕xb8 ♖xb8 27.exd5 ♘xd5 28.c4⇄ and the position is double-edged.

20.♖xe4 ♘xd5 21.♕c2 ♘xc3



22.♖g4!?

This is a logical decision, because the extra piece might prove to be quite useful in a kingside attack. White could have also played 22.♖e1 ♘b5 (22...♗xf3 23.♕xc3±) 23.♘cd2±

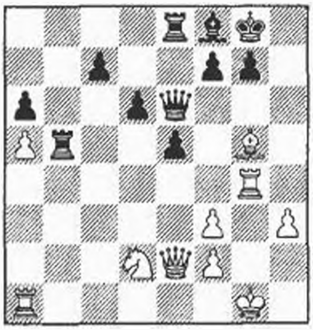
22...♗xf3 23.gxf3 ♘e2+!

Black sacrifices a pawn with that move, but he exchanges the potentially dangerous white light-squared bishop. After 23...♘b5 24.♗b2 ♕f6 25.♘d2 the bishop on b3 may prove to be quite troublesome for Black later.

24.♕xe2 ♖xb3 25.♗xh6 ♕f6 26.♘d2!

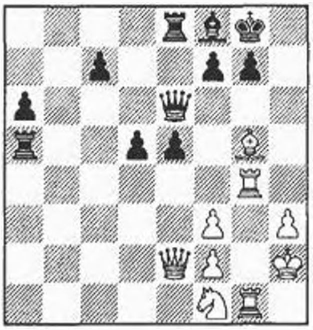
White succeeds to protect his f3-pawn with this intermediate move.

26...♖b5 27.♗g5 ♕e6



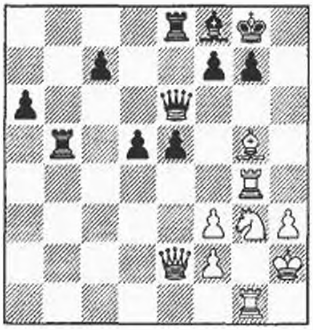
The combination that Black initiated with his move 19 is over and the position has stabilized. It is high time we evaluated it envisaging the future plans of both sides. White has a material advantage – a knight for two pawns, but Black's central pawns are ready to advance. The white knight has no accessible outposts and the a5-pawn is very weak. Judit Polgar decides to part with it in order to continue with her plan for a kingside attack.

28.♔h2 d5 29.♖ag1! ♖xa5 30.♘f1



30...d4?

This is the turning point of the game. Black should not allow the white knight to go to h5 because his position then will be defenseless. Black tries to prevent that and enters tactical complications for a second time in this game, but he overlooks White's powerful move 34. He had to play instead 30...♖b5, retreating his rook before it had been attacked with ♗g5-d2. 31. ♘g3.



This is a key position. Black should not ignore the threat 32.♘h5 which is easily understandable if you have a look at the following variations: 31...c5? 32.♘h5 (threatening 33.♘f6+!) 32...f5 (32...♔h8 33.♖h4+–) 33.♖4g2 ♕f7 34.f4, and White's attack is irresistible, for example 34...exf4 (34...e4 35.♗f6+–) 35.♘f6+! gxf6 36.♗xf6+ ♔h7 37.♖g8!!+–;

31...♖b4?! – this try to exchange the attacking rook seems logical, but the manoeuvre with the knight to h5 wins for White anyway – 32.♖xb4 ♗xb4 33.♘h5 ♗f8 34.f4 (with the fearsome threat 35.♘f6!) 34...e4 35.♘f6+!+–;

31...g6!? Black is trying not to let the white knight to h5. 32.♗h4!? (Δ♘h5-f6; 32.f4?? exf4 33.♕xe6 fxg3–+) 32...♔h8 33.♘h5!? In spite of all! 33...gxh5 34.♖g8+ ♔h7 35.f4, and White's threats are impossible to defend against, for example 35...♗h6 36.♕d3+! e4 37.♕g3 ♗xf4 38.♖g7+! ♔h8 39.♕xf4 etc.;

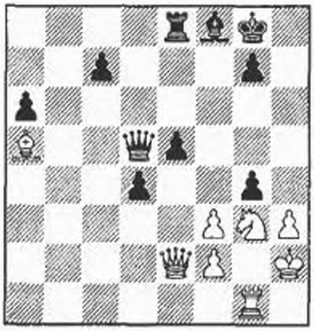
31...f5. This is evidently Black's only move. 32.♖a4 c5 33.♖ga1 ♖a8 with an unclear position. You should be able now to understand the idea behind the move 30...d4 – Black intends to answer 31.♘g3 with 31...f5, so he deprives the white rook of squares along the 4th rank beforehand.

31.♘g3 f5?!

This move leads to a lost position but it is the logical sequence of Black's previous move, besides Black was already beyond salvation anyway: 31...♖a2 32.♗d2 c5 33.♘e4 (White is suddenly threatening 34.♕c4!) 33...g6 (33...c4? 34.♕xc4!!) 34.h4 c4 35.h5, and White's attack prevails: 35...c3 36.♖xg6+!+–.

32.♗d2! fxg4 33.♗xa5 ♕d5

It is equally bad for Black to play 33...gxf3 34.♕e4!± (34.♕xf3? e4). This position emphasizes perfectly the dominance of the pieces against the pawns in the middlegame. Black has 4 (!) pawns for the knight and plenty of them are passed, but the fight is centered on the black king and the pawns are helpless, while White's extra attacking piece is decisive. After 34...c5 35.♘f5 ♖b8 (35...c4 36.♗b4!) 36.♗d2, White must win.



34.♘e4!!

This elegant tactical strike clarifies the situation immediately in favour of White.

34...♖e6

Black loses after 34...♕xa5 35.♕c4+ ♔h8 36.♖xg4+−, as well as after 34...gxf3 35.♕xf3+− Δ36.♘f6.

35.♖xg4!+− c5

Or 35...♕xa5 36.♕c4 ♕b6 37.♘g5+−

36.♘d2

The pawns have been blocked so the rest is very easy.

36...e4 37.fxe4 d3 38.exd5 ♖xe2 39.♔g2 ♖e5 40.♘e4 ♔f7 41.♖f4+ ♔e8 42.d6 ♖d5 43.♗c3 ♗xd6 44.♖f5! 1–0

170 **A22**

Aronian – I.Sokolov

Round 4 16.10

Notes by V. Beim

1.c4 e5 2.♘c3 ♗b4 3.g3 ♘f6 4.♗g2 0–0 5.♘f3 ♖e8 6.0–0 e4 7.♘g5 ♗xc3 8.bxc3

The other capture 8.dxc3 is much more popular.

8...h6 9.♘h3 ♘c6

It looks like Black did not play that natural move before. The usual line was 9...b6, in order to take control over the d5 square.

10.♘f4 d6 11.♘d5 ♗f5 12.f3 ♘xd5 13.cxd5 exf3 14.♖xf3 ♘e7 15.d3 ♗d7

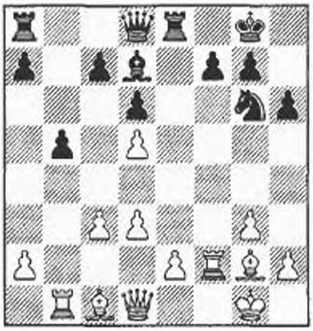
Black had to consider seriously here 15...♗g4!? 16.♖f2 ♕c8 17.♕f1 c6. The move that Black played was acceptable in principle, but I.Sokolov associated it with an unsatisfactory plan.

16.♖f2 ♘g6?!

I doubt that square to be comfortable for the knight. I think Black had to play instead 16...c6!?.

17.♖b1 b5?

This was too optimistic. In principle such a pawn-advance can seldom be advantageous on the side that your opponent is clearly dominant. It usually only creates additional weaknesses and that is definitely the case here. 17...♕c8 seemed to be more natural.



18.d4!

This excellent move is isolating the black knight for a long time in that game.

18...♖c8 19.♗d2 a6 20.♕b3!

White is playing natural and simple moves. Black fails to organize the important pawn-break c7-c6, while White is preparing c3-c4.

20...♗g4 21.e3!

This pawn may be pushed to the 4th rank at some moment later, but the long diagonal for the bishop must remain open.

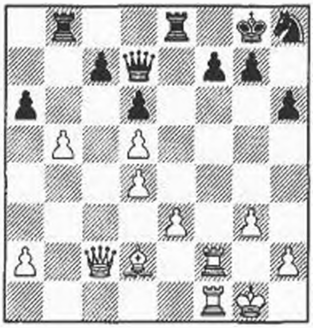
21...♕d7 22.c4 ♗h3 23.♗xh3 ♕xh3 24.cxb5 ♖b8 25.♕c2 ♕d7

After 25...♕h5 26.♖bf1 ♖e7 27.♖f5 White has a great advantage too.

26.♖bf1

Black played really badly until now and White had a great, possibly decisive advantage. He had to continue with 26.bxa6!? c5 27.dxc5 dxc5 28.e4 and Black would have hardly saved the game.

26...♘h8!?



27.♕c6

I prefer in this position as well – the line: 27.bxa6!? ♖a8 28.a4 (28.♖c1!?) 28...♖xa6 29.a5 with a clear edge for White. His winning chances are still great, though...

27...♕xc6 28.bxc6 ♖b5 29.♖f5

The move in the game looks satisfactory, but it was much better to play 29.a4! and after 29...♖b3 (In case of 29...♖xd5 30.♖b1 the white rook penetrates decisively.) 30.♗a5 ♖c8 31.e4 f6 (it is hopeless for Black to play 31...♖d3 32.♖b2 ♖xd4 33.♖fb1 ♔h7 34.♖b8+–; or 31...♖a3 32.e5 dxe5 33.dxe5 ♖xa4 34.♗xc7+–) we reach a position which is quite similar to that in the game, except that it is White to move and he can exploit that quite effectively with: 32.e5! fxe5 33.dxe5 dxe5 (33...♖d3 34.♗xc7!+–) 34.d6! cxd6 35.c7 ♘g6 36.♖d2 and White wins easily.

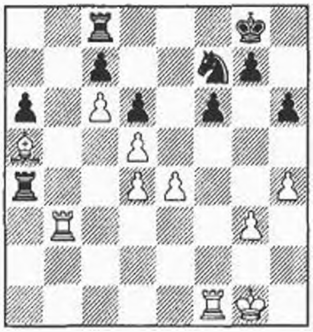
29...f6 30.a4 ♖b3 31.♗a5 ♖c8 32.e4 ♘f7 33.♖5f3 ♖b2 34.h4!?

The mobility of the black knight must be restricted. It is not good for White to abandon the attack of the c7-pawn with the bishop: 34.♗c3 ♖e2 35.♖e1 ♖a2 36.e5 fxe5 37.dxe5 dxe5 38.♗xe5 ♖e8 39.♗c3 (39.♖fe3 ♘g5; 39.♖xf7 ♔xf7 40.♖f1+ ♔g6 41.♗xc7 ♖d2!=) 39...♖xe1+ 40.♗xe1 ♖xa4 41.♖b3 and White's advantage is only symbolic.

34...♖a2

It was worth considering for Black to try keeping his rook on the b-file as long as possible.

35.♖b3 ♖xa4



36.♗xc7!

This looked like a decisive strike, but...

36...♖xc7 37.♖fb1 ♖e7

Black was losing as well after: 37...♖xd4 38.♖b8+ ♔h7 39.♖8b7 ♖c8 40.♖xf7 ♖xe4 41.♖d7.

38.e5?

This was a terrible blunder and I believed the time-trouble was to blame. White was winning easily with the simple: 38.♖b7 ♖xe4 (38...♖e8 39.♖b8+–; 38...♔f8 39.♖b8+ ♖e8 40.♖xe8+ ♔xe8 41.♖b8+ ♔e7 42.c7+–) 39.♖c1! and Black must resign.

38...♖xd4 39.♖b8+

After 39.e6? ♖xd5 Black is already better.

39...♔h7 40.exf6

Or 40.♖1b7 ♖xe5 and Black is better again.

40...gxf6 41.♖8b7 ♖e2! 42.♖xf7+

It was an unavoidable draw after 42.♖c1 ♖dd2 too.

42...♔g6 43.♖f8 ♖dd2 ½–½

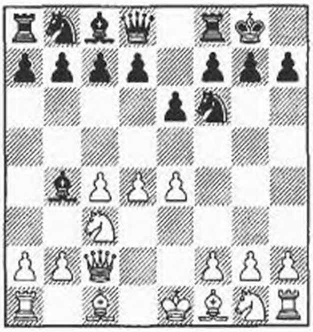
171 **E32**

Karpov – Ju.Polgar

Round 4 16.10

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.♕c2 0–0 5.e4

This is a very ambitious line for White. He takes advantage of the fact that Black does not control the e4-square presently and occupies the centre with pawns. On the other hand he falls behind in development (it is a long road till White castles) and that enables Black to create an effective counterplay by undermining White's centre. The other possibility for White – 5.a3 ♗xc3+ 6.♕xc3 b6 was leading to calmer but not less complex positions (in a tactical as well as positional aspect).



5...d5

Black counterstrikes in the centre.

6.e5 ♘e4

Black's next move is quite evident – c7-c5. White must find a way to defend his far-advanced pawns in the centre in order to preserve it from crumbling.

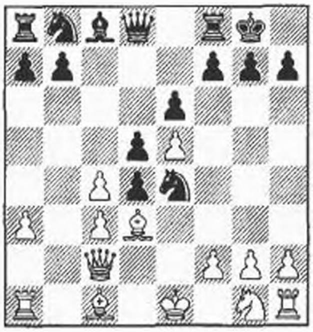
7.a3

This move forces the exchange of the bishop and so the d4-pawn is defended by a pawn on c3. The other popular line for White is – 7.♗d3 c5 8.cxd5 exd5 9.♘ge2 cxd4 10.♘xd4 ♘d7 11.f4 ♕h4+ 12.g3 ♕h3 and the game is quite unclear – White can even castle (after the manoeuvre ♗d3-f1-g2), but that is going to weaken the light squares even more.

7...♗xc3+ 8.bxc3 c5 9.♗d3

White can also try to ignore the check on a5 with – 9.♗b2 cxd4 10.cxd4 ♕a5+ 11.♔e2 f6 12.f3 ♘g5 13.h4⩲, and he had a slight edge after he repelled the enemy knight in the game Sarkar – Shahade, Seattle 2003.

9...cxd4



10.cxd4

White does not achieve much after the intermediate exchange – 10.cxd5 exd5 (Black's light-squared bishop is now free for action) 11.cxd4 f6! 12.exf6 ♕xf6 13.♗e3 ♘c6 14.♘e2 ♗f5∞ and Black had a good counterplay Sokolov – Polaczek, Antwerp 1996.

10...♕a5+ 11.♔f1 ♗d7

This is the beginning of a bit strange bishop-manoeuvre. It might be better for Black to play the straightforward 11...♘c6 12.♘e2 (but not 12.♗xe4?! dxe4 13.♗b2 ♕a6↑ Zimmerman – Belichev, Budapest 1999) 12...f6 13.♗xe4 dxe4 14.exf6 ♖xf6⇄ Gupta – Mahesh, Negombo 2003, or 11...f5 (threatening to capture on c4 and organize a swift queenside counterplay) 12.exf6 ♘xf6 13.♗d2 ♕c7 14.cxd5 ♕xc2 15.♗xc2 exd5, and despite White's bishop pair advantage in the endgame his lag in development balances the prospects Belozerov – Lahno, Rethymnon 2003.

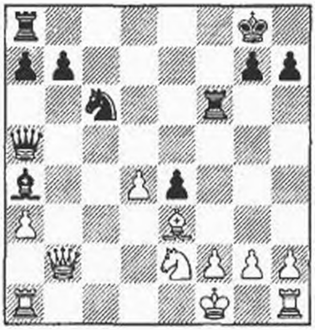
12.♘e2 ♗a4

It is not so easy to say now whether that manoeuvre is purposeful, but still White should have ample time to consolidate his forces.

13.♕b2 ♘c6 14.cxd5 exd5 15.♗e3

White cannot trap that knight with 15.f3 because of 15...f6, and after 16.fxe4? fxe5+ 17.♔g1? ♕e1# he gets checkmated.

15...f6 16.♗xe4 dxe4 17.exf6 ♖xf6



The pawn structure has been more or less determined now and we can summarize the results of the opening. It is evident what White needs to do in the nearest future – he must evacuate the king and bring his rook on h1 into action. Later he should think about attacking the weak black e4-pawn and try to operate possibly on the kingside. He can also activate his queen's rook via the c5-square. Black's position seems to be very favourable right now with the lead in development, the possibility to place the bishop beautifully on d3 and the f-file for the rooks to operate. All that is of course not sufficient and Black must find a concrete plan and real objects to attack. We must say that Black failed to be up to the task in that game.

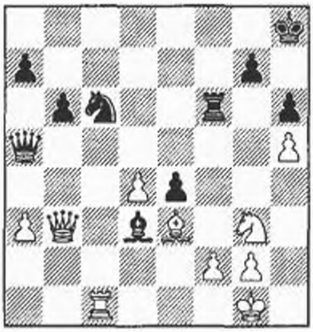
18.♔g1 ♗b5 19.♘g3 ♗d3 20.♖c1 ♖af8 21.h4

If White captures the pawn here – 21.♕xb7, then after 21...♖b8 (but not 21...♖xf2 22.♕xc6) 22.♕d7 ♖d8 23.♕g4 ♘xd4∓ the exchange of the pawns is definitely not in favour of White.

21...b6 22.♕b3+ ♔h8 23.h5 h6 24.♖h4 ♖d6

Black's combination based on a double attack fails: 24...♘xd4? 25.♗xd4 ♕g5 because of the quite unexpected counterattack by White: 26.♖c7! ♕xh4 27.♖xg7 ♖c8 28.♕b2!+–

25.♖f4 ♖xf4 26.♗xf4 ♖f6 27.♗e3



White is threatening now d4-d5 followed by ♗d4 and ♖c7. We can say that Black's plan after the opening to bring the bishop to d3 was a failure. White has seized the initiative and Black tries to decrease the pressure with a pawn-sacrifice.

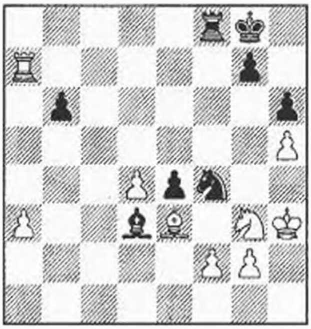
27...♘e7 28.♖c7 ♕d5 29.♕xd5

It was definitely better for White to play 29.♕d1 preserving the queens, since he had substantial chances to organize an attack against the black king.

29...♘xd5 30.♖xa7

The players entered an endgame with an extra pawn for White. As usual, with opposite-coloured bishops present on the board, its realization is far from simple, besides White's passed d-pawn has been blocked. If Black manages to preserve the blockade on d5 it will be a draw, because White will not be able to penetrate.

30...♖f8 31.♔h2 ♔g8 32.♔h3 ♘f4+



33.♔h2

White obviously has to try to win the game after 33.♔g4 (forfeiting the material advantage, but activating his pieces and unblocking the passed d-pawn) 33...♘xg2 (If 33...♘d5 34.♔h4, then White wins a couple of tempi in comparison to the game.) 34.d5 ♖d8 35.♘f5 ♗e2+ 36.♔g3 ♘xe3 37.fxe3 ♗xh5 38.♔f4 ♔f8 39.♔e5, although Black has serious counterchances, because of the passed h-pawn, for example, 39...♗f7 40.d6 ♖e8+ 41.♘e7 h5 42.♖b7 h4 43.♖xb6 ♖a8 and Black's counterplay is quite significant, so White cannot win with purely technical means.

33...♘d5 34.♖d7 ♘f6 35.♖d6 ♖a8 36.♖xb6 ♖xa3 37.♔h3

This is with the idea to defend the h5-pawn.

37...♖a5 38.♔h4 ♖d5 39.♖b7 ♗c2 40.♗f4

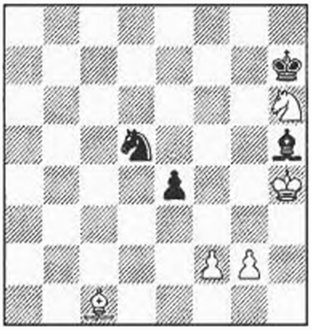
The black rook on the 5th rank ties up both White's king as well as knight. Therefore this exchange combination is possibly White's last and only chance to play for a win.

40...♖xd4 41.♖xg7+ ♔xg7 42.♘f5+ ♔h7 43.♘xd4 ♗d1

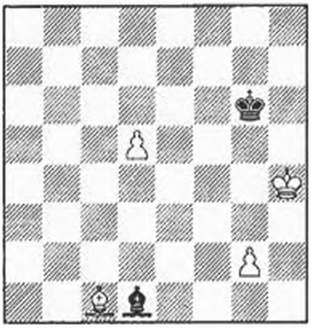
The defending side's task is much easier with a reduced number of pawns left on the board.

44.♘f5 ♗xh5 45.♘xh6 ♘d5 46.♗c1

There is no direct way for Black to draw after 46.♗g5, but still the endgame with two pawns against one on the same side of the board is in principle a draw anyway.



46...e3! 47.fxe3 ♔xh6 48.e4+ ♔g6 49.exd5 ♗d1



It is well known from theory that an endgame like that is a draw, because when the distance between the pawns is only two files the weaker side manages to hold the pawns without losing his bishop for one of them. Black demonstrates the correct method of defending in the game.

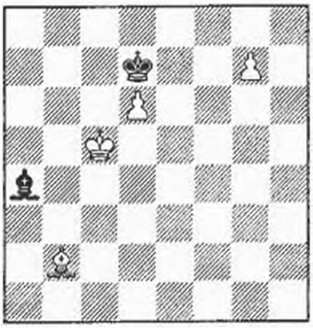
50.g4 ♗b3 51.d6 ♗e6 52.♗g5 ♗c8 53.♗e7 ♗d7 54.♔g3 ♗c8 55.♔f4 ♗d7 56.g5 ♔f7

White cannot penetrate on the kingside now and if he tries to come with his king to the queenside – Black changes the tasks of his pieces. The black king goes in front of the d-pawn and the bishop stops the g-pawn.

57.♔e5 ♗e8 58.♔d5 ♔g7 59.♔e5 ♔f7 60.♔d5 ♗a4 61.♗d8 ♔e8 62.♗a5 ♔f7 63.♗c3 ♗e8 64.♗b2 ♗a4 65.♗c1 ♗e8 66.♗b2 ♗a4 67.♔c5 ♔e6 68.g6 ♔d7 69.g7 ½ – ½

(diagram)

The opponents agreed to a draw, because Black places the bishop on g8 and simply waits. It is impossible, with a white pawn on g7, to go with the king neither to f8, nor to h8.



172 **E39**

Aronian – Karpov

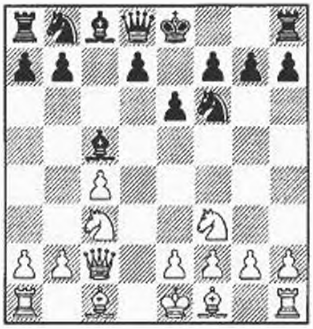
Round 5 17.10

White played very aggressively in this game. He succeeded in exploiting some almost imperceptible mistakes by his opponent in the opening.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.♕c2 c5 5.dxc5 ♗xc5

Black usually plays 5...0–0 and only after 6.a3 ♗xc5 – the move a3 might not be useful for White in some lines and so he saves a tempo.

6.♘f3



6...0–0

Black had better play 6...♕b6 7.e3 ♕c7 in this order of moves, not letting the white bishop to f4 or g5.

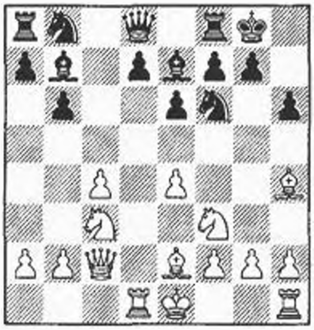
7.♗g5

This move now is more active (with an extra tempo) than 7.♗f4.

7...♗e7 8.♖d1 h6 9.♗h4 b6 10.e4

Black must worry about e4-e5 all the time now.

10...♗b7 11.♗e2



11...a6

Black tries usually to prevent the retreat of White's bishop to g3 by exchanging it with the manoeuvre ♘h5, but here after 11...♘h5 12.♗xe7 ♕xe7 13.♕d2 ♘f6 14.e5 ♘e8 15.♘b5 (this is what the move a6 aims at preventing) 15...f6 16.0–0 White maintains his positional edge. Still Black had to play probably just like that, because his plan in the game is definitely unsatisfactory.

12.0–0 ♘e8

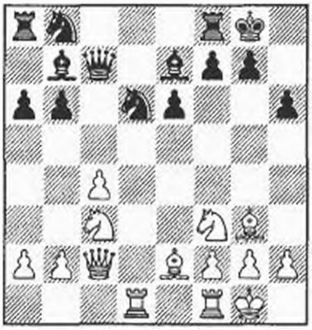
It was even riskier for Black to try 12...♘h5 13.♗xe7 ♕xe7 14.♕d2 (the position is not so clear if White plays 14.♕b3 ♘f4 15.♖fe1 ♕d8 16.c5 b5), and if 14...♘f6, then 15.e5 ♘e8 16.♕c3 – and Black loses the b6-pawn because 16...♕b4 fails after 17.a3 ♕xb2 18.♘a4 ♕c2 19.♘xb6+–.

13.♗g3

This is stronger than 13.♗xe7 ♕xe7± – the old wisdom says that the task of the defending side is harder with more pieces on the board. Here, with the dark-squared bishops present in this position, Black's queen has nowhere to run away from the unpleasant pins – the e7-square is occupied.

13...d6 14.e5 ♕c7 15.exd6 ♘xd6

Black loses after 15...♗xd6 16.♖xd6 ♘xd6 17.♖d1 ♖d8 18.♕d3+–.



16.♖d4

This is an interesting move because White lets Black develop his knight with tempo. Meanwhile the same knight takes away from the queen its only square – c6 to run away from the pin.

White is only slightly better after 16.♘e4 ♗xe4 (16...♖d8? 17.♘xd6 ♗xd6 18.♕d3+–) 17.♕xe4 ♘xe4 18.♗xc7±, although Black is not out of the woods yet in this endgame.

16...♕c6

It becomes clear now that after 16...♘c6 17.♖d2 ♖fd8 18.♖fd1 Black's position is much inferior due to the same pin: 18...♖d7 19.♘a4. White is threatening ♘xb6, and if 19...♖ad8, then White wins the exchange with 20.c5 ♘b4 21.♕c3 bxc5 22.♘xc5 ♘d5 23.♕a3+–; it is too bad for Black to play 18...♘a5 19.b4 ♘axc4 (or 19...♗xf3

20.♗xf3 ♘axc4 21.♗xa8+–) 20.♗xc4 ♕xc4 21.♗xd6±; and the stubborn 18...♘a7 will be countered with 19.♘e5, threatening already ♗h5, or ♘xf7 followed by ♕h7.

17.♗d3!

That move combines attack (with the threat to exchange on d6 followed by ♗e4) and prophylactics (defending from ♘f5).

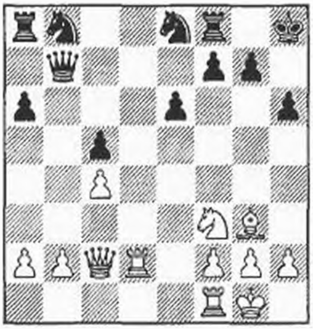
17...♘e8 18.♗h7+

This move forces the black king to retreat and the f7-pawn is now defended even worse.

18...♔h8 19.♗e4 ♕c8 20.♘a4!

The threat against the b6 pawn compels Black to weaken his position additionally.

20...♗c5 21.♘xc5 bxc5 22.♗xb7 ♕xb7 23.♖d2±



The evaluation of this position is that Black is "not out of the opening yet"! White dominates the only open file and has a powerful bishop. He has plenty of juicy targets to attack – the d6-square, the c5-pawn and eventually the d7 and f7 squares. Black failed even to complete his development, for example he cannot place his knights on f6 and c6, because he would lose the c5-pawn then. White's advantage by now is probably decisive.

23...♘f6

It was probably better for Black to defend with 23...♘c6 24.♖fd1 ♔g8, although it is not quite clear what should Black do next. After the move in the game everything is forced.

24.♖fd1 ♕c8

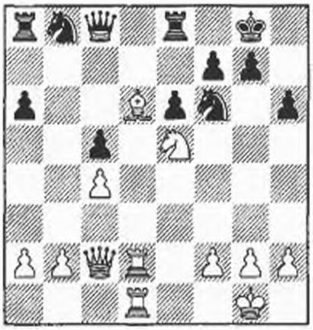
White now wins outright, but Black was beyond salvation anyway, for example: 24...♘e4? 25.♖d8+– – and Black loses a piece on b8 because the knight on e4 is hanging.

Black cannot save the game with 24...♘bd7 25.♘e5± either, because after the exchange of the knights ♗lack has nothing to do like before.

25.♗d6 ♖e8

After 25...♖d8 26.♘e5 ♔g8 27.♗e7 ♖xd2 28.♕xd2 ♘c6 29.♗xf6 gxf6 30.♘d7+–, White wins a pawn and his attack is overwhelming.

26.♘e5 ♔g8



27.♗e7!

White inflicts a final blow threatening ♖d8 and ♗xf6.

27...♕c7 28.♗xf6 gxf6 29.♕e4 ♖a7 30.♘g4 ♔g7 31.♕e3 ♖h8 32.♖d8! 1–0

White checkmates after the capture with ♕xh6 and ♘xf6, and if 32...♖h7 then 33.♕f3.

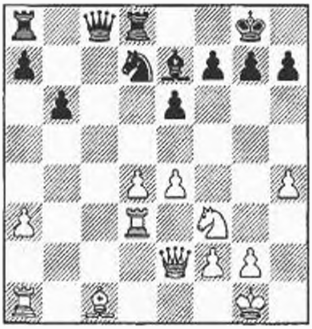
173 E12

I.Sokolov – Ju.Polgar

Round 5 17.10

Notes by D. Yevseev

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 b6 4.♘c3 ♗b7 5.a3 d5 6.cxd5 ♘xd5 7.♕c2 ♘xc3 8.bxc3 ♗e7 9.e4 0–0 10.♗d3 c5 11.0–0 ♕c8 12.♕e2 ♗a6 13.♖d1 ♖d8 14.h4 cxd4 15.cxd4 ♗xd3 16.♖xd3 ♘d7



This is a standard position of the Petrosian system of the Queen's Indian Defence. White has a powerful pawn centre and that enables him to organize active operations in the centre and on the kingside. Black dominates the open c-file and has a pawn majority on the queenside. He should strive to simplify the position because his positional pluses might turn out to be really important in the endgame.

17.♗g5 f6

It is not good for Black to play 17...♗xg5?! 18.hxg5, because the presence of the pawn on g5 creates additional attacking possibilities for White. He can exploit the h-file with g3, ♔g2, ♖h1 etc. or try to bring his knight to f6 with e5, ♘d2-e4-f6 or ♘h2-g4-f6.

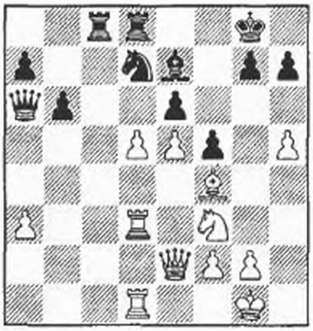
18.♗f4 ♕b7

Black had to seriously consider the immediate 18...♕a6!? 19.♖ad1 ♖ac8.

19.h5 ♖ac8 20.♖ad1 ♕a6 21.e5!?

Black was threatening 21...♖c3 – and as I already mentioned the exchanges were favourable for Black. 21.♕a2 would have been met by 21...♕c4, so White tried to enter tactical complications outright.

21...f5 22.d5!



22...exd5

If 22...♘c5, White plays 23.d6! (after 23.♖e3? ♕xe2 24.♖xe2 ♖xd5∓ White has no compensation for the pawn) 23...♘xd3 24.♕xd3! – White must trade queens to render the e6-pawn even more vulnerable (but not 24.dxe7? ♖d5 25.♘e1 ♘c5–+; while after 24.♖xd3?! ♗f8 25.♘g5 Black has the powerful move 25...♕c4 with some edge) 24...♕xd3 25.♖xd3 and it becomes clear that Black can hardly save the e6-pawn – against 23...♗f8 White would play 24.♘g5; Black's attempt to defend the pawn tactically leads to an advantage for White too: 25...♖d7!? 26.♘d4! ♔f7! 27.dxe7 ♖c4 (Most probably Black must defend with the simple 27...♔xe7 28.♗g5+ ♔f7 29.♖d2 and White has only a slight edge.) 28.♖g3! ♖xe7 (Black loses after 28...♖dxd4?

29.♖xg7+! ♔e8 30.♗g5+–) 29.♗g5! ♖d7 (In case of 29... ♖xd4 30.♗xe7 ♔xe7 31.♖xg7+– White's advantage is decisive.) 30.♘b5±.

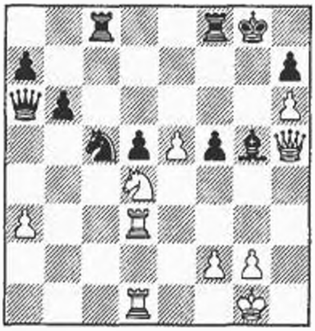
23.♘d4 ♖f8 24.♕f3 ♘c5 25.h6!

White increases the tension of the fight. He is additionally sacrificing the exchange instead of taking back his pawn. 25.♕xd5+? ♔h8 is only worsening White's position, because he would be pinned along the d-file after the retreat of the rook.

25...g5!

Black could have accepted the sacrifice of the exchange here 25...♘xd3 26.hxg7 (but not 26.♕xd5+? ♖f7 – White's calculations are justified after 26...♔h8? 27.hxg7+ ♔xg7 28.♖xd3! – and after the forced sequence of moves 27.e6 ♖f6 28.♘xf5 ♖xf5! 29.♕xf5 ♖f8 30.♕xd3 ♕xd3 31.♖xd3 ♖xf4 32.♖d7 ♗f6–+ Black gets a decisive advantage.) 26...♔xg7 27.♖xd3 ♔h8 28.♗h6=∞; 28.e6=∞ and White has more than sufficient compensation for the sacrificed material, but he has still a long way to go because the position is rather complex.

26.♗xg5! ♗xg5 27.♕h5



27...♗f4?

This was a crucially important moment of the game and Black had to make a difficult choice. Judit Polgar played a move that gave White a clear advantage to the end of the game.

Black had two more possibilities: 27...♗xh6 28.♖h3! (It is weaker for White to play 28.♖g3+ ♗g7 29.♘xf5 ♖xf5! (29...♖c7 30.♖h3!) 30.♕xf5 ♖f8 31.♕g4 ♕b7 32.♖xd5 and the game is unclear) 28...♕a4! (but not 28...b5? 29.♘xf5 ♖xf5 30.♕xf5 ♖f8 31.♕h5+– and White is winning) 29.♖d2! ♘e4 30.♕xh6 ♕d7 31.♖dd3± and despite the one pawn deficit White is clearly better since the black king is very vulnerable.

Black's best was 27...♘e4! and after 28.♖g3! (White loses after 28.f3?? ♕xd3! 29.♖xd3 ♖c1+ 30.♔h2 ♖h1+! 31.♔xh1 ♘g3–+; while in case of 28.♘e6?! ♗e7 29.♘xf8 ♖xf8 30.♖xd5 White recaptures the sacrificed material but Black seizes the initiative – 30...♗c5 31.♖f1 ♕c8∓ Δ32...♕e6) 28...b5! 29.e6! (After 29.♖xg5+ ♘xg5 30.♕xg5+ ♕g6 White is fighting for an equality) 29...♖f6! (29...♔h8 30.♖xg5 ♘xg5 31.♕xg5 ♕b7 32.♘xf5+–) 30.♖xg5+ ♘xg5 31.♕xg5+ ♖g6 32.♕xf5 ♕a4! (Black's best defence is the counterattack! After 32...♕b7 33.♕e5! White's initiative is very dangerous – he can improve his position with ♘d4-f5 and e6-e7, and if Black tries to prevent this with 33...♖e8, White can play the powerful 34.♖c1±) 33.♖e1! ♕xd4 34.e7 (34.♕f7+ leads only to a draw after 34...♔h8 35.e7 ♖xg2+! 36.♔xg2 ♕g4= but not 35...♖cg8? 36.♕xg8+! ♖xg8 37.e8♕± and the material is equal but White's positional advantage is considerable) 34...♖e8 35.♕d7 ♔f7

This is the only move! 36.♕f5+ ♔g8. And once again an only move! 37.♕d7= – This is a quite amazing problem-like positional draw!

28.♖f3

White achieves only a draw with 28.♘xf5? ♖xf5! (After 28...♔h8 29.♖xd5 White has a powerful attack.) 29.♕xf5 ♘xd3 30.♕e6+ (White should obviously avoid capturing the knight) 30...♔f8 31.♕f6+ ♔e8 32.♕e6+= and a draw by a perpetual.

28...♗xe5 29.♘xf5 ♕b7

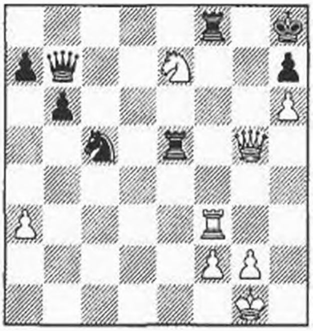
If 29...♔h8, then 30.♘e7! (30.♖xd5? ♕e2!) 30...♗b2 31.♘xc8 ♕xc8 32.♕xd5± and the material is balanced but the powerful h6-pawn and the vulnerable situation of the black king gives White a distinct advantage.

30.♖xd5! ♖ce8

30...♕xd5? 31.♘e7+–. After 30...♗b2 White plays the strong 31.♘d6; Black defends his bishop with the move in the game as well as the e7-square.

31.♕g5+ ♔h8 32.♖xe5! ♖xe5 33.♘e7!!

White's last move is the beginning of a beautiful combination and neglects the prosaic recapture of material with 33.♕g7+? ♕xg7 34.hxg7+ ♔g8 35.gxf8♕+ ♔xf8=!



This is a spectacular position! Black has an extra rook and it is his move. He can capture any one of the three white pieces but the checkmate is unavoidable! The only possibility left to try is:

33...♖e1+ 34.♔h2 ♕b8+ 35.♖g3!

White has taken everything into account. He was even losing after 35.g3?? ♘e6–+.

35...♖xe7

Black could have been checkmated spectacularly after 35...♘e6 36.♕g7+! ♘xg7 37.hxg7#.

It was equally hopeless to play 35...♕xg3+ 36.fxg3 ♘e6 37.♕d2 ♖e4 (37...♖ef1 38.♕c3+ ♖1f6 39.♘d5+–) 38.♕d3 ♖g4 (38...♖e5 39.♕c3+–) 39.♕e2+–.

36.♕xe7 ♘e6 37.♕xe6

Black had to give back plenty of material in order to avoid the immediate checkmate, but now White has an extra pawn and a positional advantage.

37...♕f4

Black fails to recapture the pawn after 37...♖xf2 38.♔h3 (White is threatening to checkmate after 39.♖g8! ♕xg8 40.♕e5+) 38...♖f8 39.♖g8+! ♖xg8 40.♕f6+ ♖g7 41.♕xg7#.

38.a4

Black is in a virtual zugzwang – there is no useful move left.

38...a6?

This mistake loses another pawn. Black was probably in a time-trouble and failed to find the not so obvious waiting move 38...♖f7. He does not lose immediately then but White's advantage after 39.♕e3± should probably be sufficient to win the game.

39.♕xb6 ♖b8 40.♕e3 ♕h4+ 41.♖h3 ♕f6 42.♕c3 1–0

174 **D15**

Karpov – I.Sokolov

Round 6 18.10

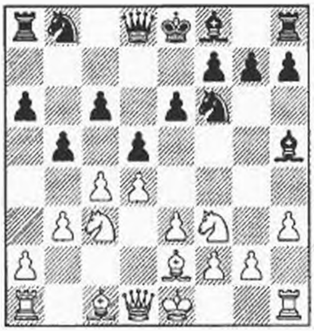
1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.♘c3 a6

This popular move is an alternative to the Meran 4...e6 as well as to the Czech Defence 4...dxc4.

5.e3 b5 6.b3 ♗g4 7.♗e2 e6 8.h3

White was playing back in the 90ies of the last century: 8.♘e5 ♗xe2 9.♕xe2 ♗b4 10.♗d2 ♕a5 11.♖c1 ♘e4 12.♘xe4 dxe4⩲ with a transition into a slightly better endgame later as in the game Vyzhmanavin – I.Sokolov, Elenite 1993.

8...♗h5



9.♘e5N

This is a novelty (because White did not play like that before with the inclusion of the moves h3 and ♗h5), but not very effective though...The critical positions in this line arise usually after 9.0–0 ♘bd7 10.♗b2 ♗d6 11.♘e5 ♗xe2 12.♘xe2 – and Black manages to develop and exchange his bad bishop. He still has a long way to go before equalizing since the weakness of the c6-square and the whole c-file is quite significant and his counterplay is nonexistent too. Black's position is more promising after:

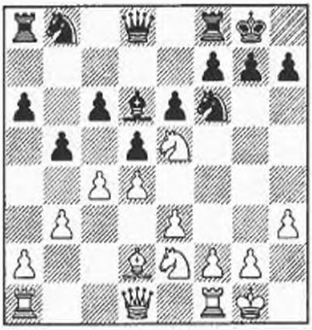
9...♗xe2 10.♘xe2

and now

10...♗b4+!

This idea became quite standard when the white pawn is on b3 and the white king has not castled yet, because the coordination of his pieces leaves a lot to be desired. White must castle first and play ♘e5 only after that.

11.♗d2 ♗d6 12.0–0 0–0



13.cxd5

White could have played 13.♖c1, preventing the development of Black's queen knight, because the pawn on c6 would be hanging then. Black would have been able to trade one of his pawns on c4, because the c-pawns would be missing in comparison to the game. White was obviously worried about the line: 13...dxc4 (Or 13...bxc4 14.bxc4 c5 15.♗c3 ♘e4 16.♗a1⩲ – and White still maintains some minimal advantage despite the symmetrical pawn structure. Black fails to equalize with 15...♘bd7 16.♘xd7 ♘xd7 17.dxc5 ♘xc5 18.♕d4.) 14.bxc4, and Black has equal chances after 14...c5, for example: 15.♘d3 ♘e4 16.dxc5 ♗xc5 17.♘xc5 ♘xd2 18.♘b7 ♕d7 19.♘c5= and a draw.

13...cxd5 14.♖c1 ♘bd7 15.♘c6

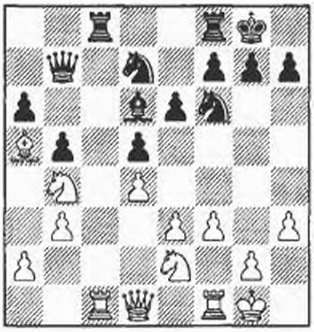
White's knight would have been protected with a bishop on b2 and the white rook would have been able to penetrate the c6-square preparing the doubling of the rooks along the c-file.

15...♕b6 16.♗a5

White's last chances to strive for an opening advantage were based on the occupation of the weak squares a5, b4 and c5. Black does not have any really bad pieces and he still controls the open file, so he manages to draw the game with a precise play.

16...♕b7 17.♘b4 ♖ac8 18.f3

White is preparing for the moment (that never came by the way...) to start playing in the centre and on the kingside with e3-e4.



18...♘b8

This is another standard idea – the passive knight on d7 will eventually be exchanged for an active white piece on the c6-square.

19.♕d2 ♘fd7 20.♖fd1 h6 21.♔f2 ♖xc1

The opponents played all necessary useful moves for the endgame and now come the beginning of a total annihilation of heavy pieces along the open c-file.

22.♖xc1 ♖c8 23.♖xc8+ ♕xc8 24.♘c1 ♘c6 25.♘xc6

Or 25.♕c2 ♘db8 26.♘cd3 ♕b7 27.♘xc6 ♕xc6= and the position is equal just like in the game.

25...♕xc6 26.♘d3 ♗c7 27.♕c3 ♕xc3 28.♗xc3 ♘b8 29.♗b4 ♘c6 30.♗c5 f5 31.♔e2 ♔f7

Should White retreat his bishop from c5 in order to place there his knight, Black can counter that with ♗b6 and trade his bishop for the knight. White played instead:

32.♘b4 ½ – ½

and the adversaries agreed to a draw because the White king cannot access the c5-square due to the powerful black dark-squared bishop.

175 C90

Ju.Polgar – Aronian

Round 6 18.10

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗a4 ♘f6 5.0–0 ♗e7 6.♖e1 b5 7.♗b3 0–0 8.d3

White avoids the ultra-sharp Marshall counterattack: 8.c3 d5. He plays more often here 8.h3 suggesting that Black reconsidered going back to the routine Chigorin schemes after – 8...d6 9.c3.

8...d6 9.c3

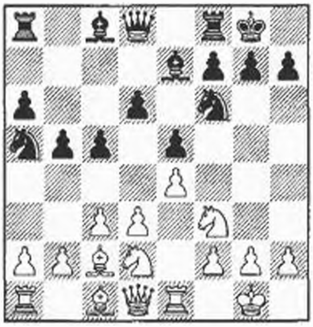
Judit Polgar is very well familiar with this position, since she has won plenty of games in it.

9...♘a5

Have a look at some of Judit's games: 9...h6 10.♘bd2 ♖e8 11.♘f1 ♗f8 12.♘g3 ♗e6 (12...g6 13.h3 ♗g7 14.d4

♗d7 15.♗c2 ♘h7 16.♗e3± Ju.Polgar – Short, Isle of Lewis 1995) 13.d4 ♗xb3 14.♕xb3 ♘a5 15.♕c2 c5 16.b3 cxd4 17.cxd4 ♖c8 18.♕d2 g6 19.♗b2± Ju.Polgar – Schroll, Vienna 1991.

10.♗c2 c5 11.♘bd2



11...♘c6

Maybe Black had better play like Anand: 11...♖e8 12.♘f1 ♗f8 13.♘g3 (13.a3 h6 14.♘e3 ♘c6 15.b4 a5 16.bxa5 ♘xa5 17.♖b1 ♗d7 18.h3 ♖b8 19.♘h2 ♘c6 20.♗d2 ♖a8∞ Ju.Polgar – Onischuk, Tilburg 1997) 13...h6 14.d4 (14.h3 ♕c7 15.♘h4 g6 16.♗e3 d5⇄ Ju.Polgar – Ivanchuk, Monaco 1996) 14...♕c7 15.d5 ♘c4 16.h3 g6 17.a4 ♗d7 18.b3 ♘a5 19.axb5 axb5 20.♗e3 ♗g7 21.♖a2 ♖eb8 22.♘d2 ♕d8 23.♕e2 ♘b7 24.♖xa8 ♖xa8 25.b4 c4∞ Ju.Polgar – Anand, Monaco 1996.

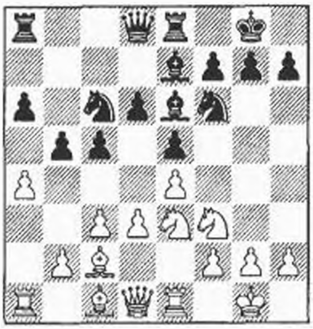
12.♘f1

Judit tried another plan in one of her earlier games: 12.a4 ♖b8 13.axb5 axb5 14.♘f1 ♖e8 15.♘e3 ♗f8 16.♗d2 h6 17.h3 d5 18.exd5 ♘xd5 19.♘xd5 ♕xd5 20.d4 cxd4 21.♗e4 ♕d6 22.♗xc6 ♕xc6 23.♘xe5± Ju.Polgar – Gomez Esteban, Santurtzi 2003.

12...♖e8 13.a4

It is amusing that Levon Aronian has played that same position with White too! – 13.♘g3 ♗f8 14.h3 g6 15.♗e3 h6 16.d4 ♗d7 17.♕d2 ♔h7 18.d5± Aronian – De Vreugt, Istanbul 2003.

13...♗e6 14.♘e3



White is threatening to play 15.♘g5 and after the retreat of the bishop 15...♗d7 in order to place the bishop to an active position with 16.♗b3.

14...h6

Black naturally prevents that plan.

15.d4!?

Otherwise Black would have played the central pawn-break d6-d5.

15...exd4 16.cxd4 ♘xd4 17.♘xd4 cxd4 18.♕xd4 ♘d7

Black has some temporary lead in development and his pieces could suddenly become very active, but still White's chances are a bit preferable, because of the weak backward d6-pawn.

19.axb5

19.♘d5 deserved attention too.

19...axb5 20.♗d2 ♗f6!? 21.♕xd6

After 21.♕b4 ♕b6 the position is approximately equal.

21...♖xa1 22.♖xa1 ♗xb2 23.♖b1

White now has another object to attack – the weak black b5-pawn instead of the d6-pawn.

23...♗e5 24.♕d3 ♕c7 25.♘d5

White still cannot win a pawn: 25.♖xb5 ♘c5 26.♕a3 ♗xh2+ 27.♔h1 ♗d6=.

25...♗xd5 26.exd5 ♘f6?!

Black had better exchange his weak b5-pawn for the white h2-pawn: 26...♗xh2+ 27.♔h1 ♗d6 28.♖xb5 (28.♕h7+ ♔f8 29.♕h8+ ♔e7 30.♖e1+ ♘e5∞) 28...♘f6∞.

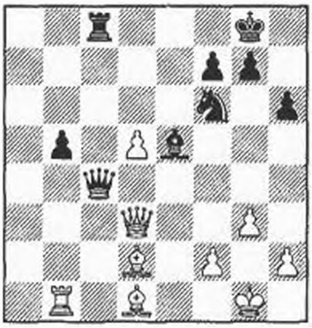
27.g3

The bishop pair advantage and the weakness of the b5-pawn make White's position clearly preferable.

27...♖c8?!

It is too risky is for Black to play 27...♘xd5?, since after 28.♕h7+ ♔f8 29.♖e1 ♖e6 30.♗b3 ♕c5 31.♕d3 all black pieces are practically pinned. Black had to protect his pawn with 27...♖b8!? instead, but he just overlooked White's move 29.

28.♗d1 ♕c4?



This is a blunder and now White wins almost by force.

29.♖c1! ♕xc1

After 29...♕xd3 Black loses the exchange in a hopeless position 30.♖xc8+ ♘e8 (30...♔h7 31.♗c2+−) 31.♗c2!+−.

30.♗xc1 ♖xc1 31.d6

White's d6 pawn is too dangerous.

31...♘d7

Or 31...♖c8 32.f4 ♗b2 33.♕xb5+−.

32.♔g2 ♗f6 33.♗c2 g6 34.♗b3 ♔g7 35.♕d5 1–0

This win secured the first place in the tournament for Judit Polgar.

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